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SELF-CULTURE.

AN ADDRESS
INTRODUCTORY TO THE FRANKLIN LECTURES,

DELIVERED AT BOSTON, UNITED STATES,
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BY WILLIAM E. CHANNING.

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A D D R E S S .

MY RESPECTED FRIENDS,

BY the invitation of the committee of arrangements for the Franklin Lectures, I now appear before you to offer some remarks introductory to this course. My principal inducement for so doing is my deep interest in those of my fellow-citizens, for whom these lectures are principally designed. I understood that they were to be attended chiefly by those who are occupied by manual labour; and, hearing this, I did not feel myself at liberty to decline the service, to which I had been invited. I wished by compliance to express my sympathy with this large portion of my race. I wished to express my sense of obligation to those, from whose industry and skill I derive almost all the comforts of life. I wished still more to express my joy in the efforts they are making for their own improvement, and my firm faith in their success. These motives will give a particular character and bearing to some of my remarks. I shall speak occasionally as among those who live by the labour of their hands; but I shall not speak as one separated from them. I belong rightfully to the great fraternity of working men. Happily in this community we are all bred and born to work; and this honourable mark, set on us all, should bind together the various portions of the community.

I have expressed my strong interest in the mass of the people; and this is founded, not on their usefulness to the community, so much as on what they are in themselves. Their condition is indeed obscured; but their importance is not on this account a whit the less. The multitude of men cannot from the nature of the case be distinguished; for the very idea of distinction is, that a man stands out from the multitude. They make little noise and draw little notice in their narrow spheres of action; but still they have their full proportion of personal worth, and even of greatness. Indeed every man, in every condition, is great: it is only our own diseased sight which makes him little. A man is great as a man, be he where or what he may. The grandeur of his nature turns to insignificance all out-

ward distinctions. His powers of intellect, of conscience, of love, of knowing God, of perceiving the beautiful, of acting on his own mind, on outward nature, and on his fellow-creatures, these are glorious prerogatives. Through the vulgar error of undervaluing what is common, we are apt indeed to pass these by as of little worth. But as in the outward creation, so in the soul, the common is the most precious. Science and art may invent splendid modes of illuminating the apartments of the opulent; but these are all poor and worthless, compared with the common light which the sun sends into all our windows, which he pours freely, impartially over hill and valley, which kindles daily the eastern and western sky; and so the common lights of reason, and conscience, and love are of more worth and dignity than the rare endowments which give celebrity to a few. Let us not disparage that nature which is common to all men; for no thought can measure its grandeur. It is the image of God, the image even of his infinity; for no limits can be set to its unfolding. He who possesses the divine powers of the soul is a great being, be his place what it may. You may clothe him with rags, may immerse him in a dungeon, may chain him to slavish tasks: but he is still great. You may shut him out of your houses; but God opens to him heavenly mansions. He makes no show indeed in the streets of a splendid city; but a clear thought, a pure affection, a resolute act of a virtuous will have a dignity of quite another kind, and far higher than accumulations of brick and granite, and plaster and stucco, however cunningly put together, or though stretching far beyond our sight. Nor is this all. If we pass over this grandeur of our common nature, and turn our thoughts to that comparative greatness, which draws chief attention, and which consists in the decided superiority of the individual to the general standard of power and character, we shall find this as free and frequent a growth among the obscure and unnoticed, as in more conspicuous walks of life. The truly great are to be found everywhere; nor is it easy to say, in what condition they spring up most plentifully. Real greatness has nothing to do with a man's sphere. It does not lie in the magnitude of his outward agency, in the extent of the effects which he produces. The greatest men may do comparatively little abroad. Perhaps the greatest in our city at this moment are buried in obscurity. Grandeur of character lies wholly in force of soul, that is, in the force of thought, moral principle, and love; and this may be found in the humblest condition of life. A man brought up to an obscure trade, and hemmed in by the wants of a

growing family, may, in his narrow sphere, perceive more clearly, discriminate more keenly, weigh evidence more wisely, seize on the right means more decisively, and have more presence of mind in difficulty, than another who has accumulated vast stores of knowledge by laborious study; and he has more of intellectual greatness. Many a man, who has gone but a few miles from home, understands human nature better, detects motives and weighs character more sagaciously, than another, who has travelled over the known world, and made a name by his reports of different countries. It is force of thought which measures intellectual, and so it is force of principle which measures moral, greatness—that highest of human endowments, that brightest manifestation of the Divinity. The greatest man is he who chooses the Right with invincible resolution; who resists the sorest temptations from within and without; who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully; who is calmest in storms, and most fearless under menace and frowns; whose reliance on truth, on virtue, on God, is most unfaltering. And is this a greatness which is apt to make a show, or which is most likely to abound in conspicuous station? The solemn conflicts of reason with passion; the victories of moral and religious principle over urgent and almost irresistible solicitations to self-indulgence; the hardest sacrifices of duty, those of deep-seated affection and of the heart's fondest hopes; the consolations, hopes, joys, and peace of disappointed, persecuted, scorned, deserted virtue—these are of course unseen: so that the true greatness of human life is almost wholly out of sight. Perhaps in our presence, the most heroic deed on earth is done in some silent spirit, the loftiest purpose cherished, the most generous sacrifice made, and we do not suspect it. I believe this greatness to be most common among the multitude, whose names are never heard. Among common people will be found more of hardship borne manfully, more of unvarnished truth, more of religious trust, more of that generosity which gives what the giver needs himself and more of a wise estimate of life and death, than among the more prosperous. And even in regard to influence over other beings, which is thought the peculiar prerogative of distinguished station, I believe that the difference between the conspicuous and the obscure does not amount to much. Influence is to be measured, not by the extent of surface it covers, but by its *kind*. A man may spread his mind, his feelings, and opinions through a great extent; but if his mind be a low one, he manifests no greatness. A wretched artist may fill a city with daubs, and by a false showy style achieve a reputation; but the man of

genius, who leaves behind him one grand picture, in which immortal beauty is embodied, and which is silently to spread a true taste in his art, exerts an incomparably higher influence. Now the noblest influence on earth is that exerted on character ; and he who puts forth this, does a great work, no matter how narrow or obscure his sphere. The father and mother of an unnoticed family who, in their seclusion, awaken the mind of one child to the idea and love of perfect goodness, who awaken in him a strength of will to repel all temptation, and who send him out prepared to profit by the conflicts of life, surpass in influence a Napoleon breaking the world to his sway. And not only is their work higher in kind. Who knows, but that they are doing a greater work even as to extent or surface than the conqueror? Who knows, but that the being, whom they inspire with holy and disinterested principles, may communicate himself to others ; and that by a spreading agency, of which they were the silent origin, improvements may spread through a nation, through the world? In these remarks, you will see why I feel and express a deep interest in the obscure, in the mass of men. The distinctions of society vanish before the light of these truths. I attach myself to the multitude, not because they are voters and have political power ; but because they are men, and have within their reach the most glorious prizes of humanity.

In this country the mass of the people are distinguished by possessing means of improvement, of self-culture, possessed nowhere else. To incite them to the use of these, is to render them the best service they can receive. Accordingly, I have chosen for the subject of this lecture, Self-culture, or the care which every man owes to himself, to the unfolding and perfecting of his nature. I consider this topic as particularly appropriate to the introduction of a course of lectures, in consequence of a common disposition to regard these, and other like means of instruction, as able of themselves to carry forward the hearer. Lectures have their use. They stir up many, who, but for such outward appeals, might have slumbered to the end of life. But let it be remembered, that little is to be gained simply by coming to this place once a week, and giving up the mind for an hour to be wrought upon by a teacher. Unless we are roused to act upon ourselves ; unless we engage in the work of self-improvement ; unless we purpose strenuously to form and elevate our own minds ; unless what we hear is made a part of ourselves by conscientious reflection, very little permanent good is received.

Self-culture, I am aware, is a topic too extensive for a single discourse; and I shall be able to present but a few views, which seem to me most important. My aim will be, to give first the Idea of self-culture, next its Means, and then to consider some objections to the leading views which I am now to lay before you.

Before entering on the discussion, let me offer one remark. Self-culture is something possible: it is not a dream; it has foundations in our nature. Without this conviction, the speaker will but declaim, and the hearer listen, without profit. There are two powers of the human soul which make self-culture possible, the self-searching and the self-forming power. We have first the faculty of turning the mind on itself; of recalling its past, and watching its present, operations; of learning its various capacities and susceptibilities, what it can do and bear, what it can enjoy and suffer; and of thus learning in general what our nature is, and what it was made for. It is worthy of observation, that we are able to discern not only what we already are, but what we may become, to see in ourselves germs and promises of a growth to which no bounds can be set, to dart beyond what we have actually gained to the idea of Perfection as the end of our being. It is by this self-comprehending power that we are distinguished from the brutes, which give no signs of looking into themselves. Without this there would be no self-culture, for we should not know the work to be done; and one reason why self-culture is so little proposed is, that so few penetrate into their own nature. To most men, their own spirits are shadowy, unreal, compared with what is outward. When they happen to cast a glance inward, they see there only a dark, vague chaos. They distinguish perhaps some violent passion, which has driven them to injurious excess; but their highest powers hardly attract a thought: and thus multitudes live and die, as truly strangers to themselves, as to countries of which they have heard the name, but which human foot has never trodden.

But self-culture is possible, not only because we can enter into and search ourselves;—we have a still nobler power, that of acting on, determining, and forming ourselves. This is a fearful as well as glorious endowment, for it is the ground of human responsibility. We have the power not only of tracing our powers, but of guiding and impelling them; not only of watching our passions, but of controlling them; not only of seeing our faculties grow, but of applying to them means and influences to aid their growth. We can stay or change the current of

thought: we can concentrate the intellect on objects which we wish to comprehend: we can fix our eyes on perfection, and make almost everything speed us towards it. This is, indeed, a noble prerogative of our nature. Possessing this, it matters little what or where we are now; for we can conquer a better lot, and even be happier for starting from the lowest point. Of all the discoveries which men need to make, the most important at the present moment is that of the self-forming power treasured up in themselves. They little suspect its extent, as little as the savage apprehends the energy which the mind is created to exert on the material world. It transcends in importance all our power over outward nature. There is more of divinity in it, than in the force which impels the outward universe; and yet how little we comprehend it! How it slumbers in most men unsuspected, unused! This makes self-culture possible, and binds it on us as a solemn duty.

I. I am first to unfold the idea of self-culture; and this, in its most general form, may easily be seized. To cultivate anything, be it a plant, an animal, a mind, is to make grow. Growth, expansion is the end. Nothing admits culture, but that which has a principle of life capable of being expanded. He, therefore, who does what he can to unfold all his powers and capacities, especially his nobler ones, so as to become a well-proportioned, vigorous, excellent, happy being, practises self-culture.

This culture, of course, has various branches corresponding to the different capacities of human nature; but, though various, they are intimately united and make progress together. The soul which our philosophy divides into various capacities, is still one essence, one life; and it exerts at the same moment, and blends in the same act, its various energies of thought, feeling, and volition. Accordingly in a wise self-culture, all the principles of our nature grow at once by joint harmonious action, just as all parts of the plant are unfolded together. When, therefore, you hear of different branches of self-improvement, you will not think of them as distinct processes going on independently of each other, and requiring each its own separate means. Still, a distinct consideration of these is needed to a full comprehension of the subject, and these I shall proceed to unfold.

First, Self-culture is Moral, a branch of singular importance. When a man looks into himself, he discovers two distant orders or kinds of principles which it behoves him especially to comprehend. He discovers

desires, appetites, passions, which terminate in himself, which crave and seek his own interest, gratification, distinction; and he discovers another principle, an antagonist to these, which is impartial, disinterested, universal, enjoining on him a regard to the rights and happiness of other beings, and laying on him obligations which *must* be discharged, cost what they may, or however they may clash with his particular pleasure or gain. No man, however narrowed to his own interest, however hardened by selfishness, can deny that there springs up within him a great idea in opposition to interest, the idea of duty, that an inward voice calls him more or less distinctly to revere and exercise impartial justice, and universal good-will. This disinterested principle in human nature we call sometimes reason, sometimes conscience, sometimes the moral sense or faculty. But, be its name what it may, it is a real principle in each of us; and it is the supreme power within us, to be cultivated above all others, for on its culture the right development of all others depends. The passions indeed may be stronger than the conscience, may lift up a louder voice; but their clamour differs wholly from the tone of command in which the conscience speaks. They are not clothed with its authority, its binding power. In their very triumphs they are rebuked by the moral principle, and often cower before its still deep menacing voice. No part of self-knowledge is more important than to discern clearly these two great principles, the self-seeking and the disinterested; and the most important part of self-culture is to depress the former, and to exalt the latter, or to enthrone the sense of duty within us. There are no limits to the growth of this moral force in man, if he will cherish it faithfully. There have been men, whom no power in the universe could turn from the right, to whom death in its most dreadful forms has been less dreaded, than transgression of the inward law of universal justice and love.

In the next place, Self-culture is religious. When we look into ourselves, we discover powers which link us with this outward, visible, finite, ever-changing world. We have sight and other senses to discern, and limbs and various faculties to secure and appropriate the material creation: and we have too a power, which cannot stop at what we see and handle, at what exists within the bounds of space and time; which seeks for the infinite, uncreated cause; which cannot rest till it ascend to the eternal, all-comprehending mind. This we call the religious principle, and its grandeur cannot be exaggerated by human language; for it marks out a being destined for

higher communion than with the visible universe. To develope this, is eminently to educate ourselves. The true idea of God, unfolded clearly and livingly within us, and moving us to adore and obey him, and to aspire after likeness to him, is the noblest growth in human and, I may add, in celestial natures. The religious principle and the moral are intimately connected, and grow together. The former is indeed the perfection and highest manifestation of the latter: they are both disinterested. It is the essence of true religion to recognise and adore in God the attributes of imperial justice and universal love, and to hear him commanding us in the conscience to become what we adore.

Again. Self-culture is intellectual. We cannot look into ourselves without discovering the intellectual principle, the power which thinks, reasons, and judges—the power of seeking and acquiring truth. This, indeed, we are in no danger of overlooking. The intellect being the great instrument by which men compass their wishes, it draws more attention than any of our other powers. When we speak to men of improving themselves, the first thought which occurs to them is, that they must cultivate their understanding, and get knowledge and skill. By education, men mean almost exclusively intellectual training. For this, schools and colleges are instituted; and to this the moral and religious discipline of the young is sacrificed. Now I reverence, as much as any man, the intellect; but let us never exalt it above the moral principle. With this it is most intimately connected. In this its culture is founded, and to exalt this is its highest aim. Whoever desires that his intellect may grow up to soundness, to healthy vigour, must begin with moral discipline. Reading and study are not enough to perfect the power of thought. One thing above all is needful, and that is, the disinterestedness which is the very soul of virtue. To gain truth, which is the great object of the understanding, I must seek it disinterestedly. Here is the first and grand condition of intellectual progress. I must choose to receive the truth, no matter how it bears on myself. I must follow it, no matter where it leads, what interests it opposes, to what persecution or loss it lays me open, from what party it severs me, or to what party it allies. Without this fairness of mind, which is only another phrase for disinterested love of truth, great native powers of understanding are perverted and led astray; genius runs wild; “the light within us becomes darkness.” The subtlest reasoners, for want of this, cheat themselves as well as others, and become entangled in the web of their

own sophistry. It is a fact, well known in the history of science and philosophy, that men, gifted by nature with singular intelligence, have broached the grossest errors, and even sought to undermine the grand primitive truths on which human virtue, dignity, and hope depend. And, on the other hand, I have known instances of men of naturally moderate powers of mind, who, by a disinterested love of truth and their fellow-creatures, have gradually risen to no small force and enlargement of thought. Some of the most useful teachers in the pulpit and in schools have owed their power of enlightening others, not so much to any natural superiority, as to the simplicity, impartiality, and disinterestedness of their minds, to their readiness to live and die for the truth. A man who rises above himself, looks from an eminence on nature and Providence, on society and life. Thought expands, as by a natural elasticity, when the pressure of selfishness is removed. The moral and religious principles of the soul, generously cultivated, fertilize the intellect. Duty, faithfully performed, opens the mind to truth, both being of one family, alike immutable, universal, and everlasting.

I have enlarged on this subject, because the connexion between moral and intellectual culture is often overlooked, and because the former is often sacrificed to the latter. The exaltation of talent, as it is called, above virtue and religion, is the curse of the age. Education is now chiefly a stimulus to learning; and thus men acquire power without the principles which alone make it a good. Talent is worshipped; but, if divorced from rectitude, it will prove more of a demon than a God.

Intellectual culture consists, not chiefly, as many are apt to think, in accumulating information, though this is important, but in building up a force of thought, which may be turned at will on any subjects on which we are called to pass judgment. This force is manifested in the concentration of the attention, in accurate penetrating observation; in reducing complex subjects to their elements; in diving beneath the effect to the cause; in detecting the more subtle differences and resemblances of things; in reading the future in the present; and, especially, in rising from particular facts to general laws or universal truths. This last exertion of the intellect, its rising to broad views and great principles, constitutes what is called the philosophical mind, and is especially worthy of culture. What it means your own observation must have taught you. You must have taken note of two classes of men, the one always employed on details, on particular facts; and the

other using these facts as foundations of higher, wider truths. The latter are philosophers. For example: men had for ages seen pieces of wood, stones, metals, falling to the ground. Newton seized on these particular facts, and rose to the idea that all matter tends, or is attracted, towards all matter; and then defined the law according to which this attraction or force acts at different distances: thus giving us a grand principle, which, we have reason to think, extends to and controls the whole outward creation. One man reads a history, and can tell you all its events, and there stops: another combines these events, brings them under one view, and learns the great causes which are at work on this or another nation, and what are its great tendencies, whether to freedom or despotism, to one or another form of civilization. So one man talks continually about the particular actions of this or another neighbour; whilst another looks beyond the acts to the inward principle from which they spring, and gather from them larger views of human nature. In a word, one man sees all things apart and in fragments; whilst another strives to discover the harmony, connexion, unity, of all. One of the great evils of society is, that men, occupied perpetually with petty details, want general truths, want broad and fixed principles. Hence many, not wicked, are unstable, habitually inconsistent, as if they were overgrown children rather than men. To build up that strength of mind which apprehends and cleaves to great universal truths, is the highest intellectual self-culture: and here I wish you to observe how entirely this culture agrees with that of the moral and the religious principles of our nature, of which I have previously spoken. In each of these, the improvement of the soul consists in raising it above what is narrow, particular, individual, selfish, to the universal and unconfined. To improve a man, is to liberalize, enlarge him in thought, feeling, and purpose. Narrowness of intellect and heart, this is the degradation from which all culture aims to rescue the human being.

Again. Self-culture is social, as one of its great offices is to unfold and purify the affections which spring up instinctively in the human breast; which bind together husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister; which bind a man to friends and neighbours, to his country, and to the suffering who fall under his eye, wherever they belong. The culture of these is an important part of our work; and it consists in converting them from instincts into principles, from natural into spiritual attachments; in giving them a rational, moral,

and holy character. For example: our affection for our children is at first instinctive; and if it continue such, it rises little above the brute's attachment to its young. But when a parent infuses into his natural love for his offspring moral and religious principle; when he comes to regard his child as an intelligent, spiritual, immortal being; and honours him as such, and desires first of all to make him disinterested, noble, a worthy child of God and the friend of his race, then the instinct rises into a generous and holy sentiment: it resembles God's paternal love for his spiritual family. A like purity and dignity we must aim to give to all our affections.

Again. Self-culture is practical, or it proposes as one of its chief ends to fit us for action, to make us efficient in whatever we undertake, to train us to firmness of purpose and to fruitfulness of resource in common life, and especially in emergencies, in times of difficulty, danger, and trial. But passing over this and other topics, for which I have no time, I shall confine myself to two branches of self-culture, which have been almost wholly overlooked in the education of the people, and which ought not to be so slighted.

In looking at our nature, we discover, among its admirable endowments, the sense or perception of beauty. We see the germ of this in every human being; and there is no power which admits greater cultivation: and why should it not be cherished in all? It deserves remark, that the provision for this principle is infinite in the universe. There is but a very minute portion of the creation which we can turn into food and clothes, or gratification for the body; but the whole creation may be used to minister to the sense of beauty. Beauty is an all-pervading presence: it unfolds in the numberless flowers of the spring; it waves in the branches of the trees and the green blades of grass; it haunts the depths of the earth and sea, and gleams out in the hues of the shell and the precious stone: and not only these minute objects, but the ocean, the mountains, the clouds, the heavens, the stars, the rising and setting sun, all overflow with beauty. The universe is its temple; and those men who are alive to it cannot lift their eyes without feeling themselves encompassed with it on every side. Now this beauty is so precious, the enjoyments it gives are so refined and pure, so congenial with our tenderest and noble feelings, and so akin to worship, that it is painful to think of the multitude of men as living in the midst of it, and living almost as blind to it, as if, instead of this fair earth and glorious sky, they were tenants of a

dungeon. An infinite joy is lost to the world by the want of culture of this spiritual endowment. Suppose that I were to visit a cottage, and to see its walls lined with the choicest pictures of Raphael, and every spare nook filled with statues of the most exquisite workmanship, and that I were to learn that neither man, woman, nor child, ever cast an eye at these miracles of art, how should I feel their privation; how should I want to open their eyes, and to help them to comprehend and feel the loveliness and grandeur which in vain courted their notice! But every husbandman is living in sight of the works of a diviner artist; and how much would his existence be elevated, could he see the glory which shines forth in their forms, hues, proportions, and moral expression! I have spoken only of the beauty of nature; but how much of this mysterious charm is found in the elegant arts, and especially in literature? The best books have most beauty. The greatest truths are wronged if not linked with beauty, and they win their way most surely and deeply into the soul when arrayed in this their natural and fit attire. Now no man receives the true culture of a man, in whom the sensibility to the beautiful is not cherished; and I know of no condition in life from which it should be excluded. Of all luxuries this is the cheapest and most at hand; and it seems to me to be most important to those conditions, where coarse labour tends to give a grossness to the mind. From the diffusion of the sense of beauty in ancient Greece, and of the taste for music in modern Germany, we learn that the people at large may partake of refined gratifications which have hitherto been thought to be necessarily restricted to a few.

What beauty is, is a question which the most penetrating minds have not satisfactorily answered; nor, were I able, is this the place for discussing it. But one thing I would say: the beauty of the outward creation is intimately related to the lovely, grand, interesting attributes of the soul. It is the emblem or expression of these. Matter becomes beautiful to us, when it seems to lose its material aspect, its inertness, finiteness, and grossness; and by the ethereal lightness of its forms and motions seems to approach spirit, when it images to us pure and gentle affections; when it spreads out into a vastness which is a shadow of the Infinite; or when, in more awful shapes and movements, it speaks of the Omnipotent. Thus outward beauty is akin to something deeper and unseen, is the reflection of spiritual attributes; and, of consequence, the way to see and feel it more and more

keenly, is to cultivate those moral, religious, intellectual, and social principles of which I have already spoken, and which are the glory of the spiritual nature; and I name this that you may see what I am anxious to show, the harmony which subsists among all branches of human culture, or how each forwards and is aided by all.

There is another power, which each man should cultivate according to his ability, but which is very much neglected in the mass of the people, and that is the power of utterance. A man was not made to shut up his mind in itself, but to give it voice, and to exchange it for other minds. Speech is one of our grand distinctions from the brute. Our power over others lies not so much in the amount of thought within us, as in the power of bringing it out. A man of more than ordinary intellectual vigour may, for want of expression, be a cipher, without significance in society. And not only does a man influence others, but he greatly aids his own intellect, by giving distinct and forcible utterance to his thoughts. We understand ourselves better, our conceptions grow clearer, by the very effort to make them clear to another. Our social rank, too, depends a good deal on our power of utterance. The principal distinction between what are called gentlemen and the vulgar lies in this, that the latter are awkward in manners, and are essentially wanting in propriety, clearness, grace, and force of utterance. A man who cannot open his lips without breaking a rule of grammar, without showing in his dialect or brogue, or uncouth tones, his want of cultivation; or without darkening his meaning by a confused, unskilful mode of communication, cannot take the place to which, perhaps, his native good sense entitles him. To have intercourse with respectable people, we must speak their language. On this account, I am glad that grammar and a correct pronunciation are taught in the common schools of this city. These are not trifles; nor are they superfluous to any class of people. They give a man access to social advantages, on which his improvement very much depends. The power of utterance should be included by all in their plans of self-culture.

I have now given a few views of the culture, the improvement, which every man should propose to himself. I have all along gone on the principle, that a man has within him capacities of growth which deserve and will reward intense, unrelaxing toil. I do not look on a human being as a machine, made to be kept in action by a foreign force, to accomplish an unvarying succession of motions, to do a fixed amount of work, and then to fall to pieces at death; but as a being of free spiritual powers:

and I place little value on any culture but that which aims to bring out these, and to give them perpetual impulse and expansion. I am aware, that this view is far from being universal. The common notion has been, that the mass of the people need no other culture than is necessary to fit them for their various trades; and though this error is passing away, it is far from being exploded. But the ground of a man's culture lies in his nature, not in his calling. His powers are to be unfolded on account of their inherent dignity, not their outward direction. He is to be educated, because he is a man, not because he is to make shoes, nails, or pins. A trade is plainly not the great end of his being, for his mind cannot be shut up in it; his force of thought cannot be exhausted on it. He has faculties to which it gives no action, and deep wants it cannot answer. Poems, and systems of theology and philosophy, which have made some noise in the world, have been wrought at the work-bench, and amidst the toils of the field. How often, when the arms are mechanically plying a trade, does the mind, lost in reverie or day dreams, escape to the ends of the earth! How often does the pious heart of woman mingle the greatest of all thoughts, that of God, with household drudgery! Undoubtedly a man is to perfect himself in his trade; for by it he is to earn his bread and to serve the community. But bread or subsistence is not his highest good; for if it were, his lot would be harder than that of the inferior animals; for whom nature spreads a table, and weaves a wardrobe, without a care of their own. Nor was he made chiefly to minister to the wants of the community. A rational moral being cannot, without infinite wrong, be converted into a mere instrument of others' gratification. He is necessarily an end, not a means. A mind, in which are sown the seeds of wisdom, disinterestedness, firmness of purpose, and piety, is worth more than all the outward material interests of a world. It exists for itself, for its own perfection, and must not be enslaved to its own or others' animal wants. You tell me, that a liberal culture is needed for men who are to fill high stations, but not for such as are doomed to vulgar labour. I answer, that Man is a greater name than president or king. Truth and goodness are equally precious, in whatever sphere they are found. Besides, men of all conditions sustain equally the relations which give birth to the highest virtues and demand the highest powers. The labourer is not a mere labourer: he has close, tender, responsible connexions with God and his fellow-creatures: he is a son, husband, father, friend, and Christian: he belongs

to a home, a country, a church, a race; and is such a man to be cultivated only for a trade? Was he not sent into the world for a great work? To educate a child perfectly requires profounder thought, greater wisdom, than to govern a state; and for this plain reason, that the interests and wants of the latter are more superficial, coarser, and more obvious, than the spiritual capacities, the growth of thought and feeling, and the subtle laws of the mind, which must all be studied and comprehended, before the work of education can be thoroughly performed: and yet to all conditions this greatest work on earth is equally committed by God. What plainer proof do we need, that a higher culture than has yet been dreamed of is needed by our whole race.

II. I now proceed to enquire into the means by which the self-culture, just described, may be promoted; and here I know not where to begin. The subject is so extensive, as well as important, that I feel myself unable to do any justice to it, especially in the limits to which I am confined. I beg you to consider me as presenting but hints, and such as have offered themselves with very little research to my own mind.

And, first, the great means of self-culture, that which includes all the rest, is to fasten on this culture as our great end, to determine deliberately and solemnly, that we will make the most and the best of the powers which God has given us. Without this resolute purpose, the best means are worth little, and with it the poorest become mighty. You may see thousands, with every opportunity of improvement which wealth can gather, with teachers, libraries, and apparatus, bringing nothing to pass; and others, with few helps, doing wonders; and simply because the latter are in earnest, and the former not. A man in earnest finds means, or, if he cannot find, creates them. A vigorous purpose makes much out of little, breathes power into weak instruments, disarms difficulties, and even turns them into assistances. Every condition has means of progress, if we have spirit enough to use them. Some volumes have recently been published, giving examples or histories of "knowledge acquired under difficulties;" and it is most animating to see in these what a resolute man can do for himself. A great idea, like this of self-culture, if seized on clearly and vigorously, burns like a living coal in the soul. He who deliberately adopts a great end, has, by this act, half accomplished it, has scaled the chief barrier to success.

One thing is essential to the strong purpose of self-culture now insisted on, namely, faith in the practicable.

ness of this culture. A great object, to awaken resolute choice, must be seen to be within our reach. The truth, that progress is the very end of our being, must not be received as a tradition, but comprehended and felt as a reality. Our minds are apt to pine and starve, by being imprisoned within what we have already attained. A true faith, looking up to something better, catching glimpses of a distant perfection, prophesying to ourselves improvements proportioned to our conscientious labours, gives energy of purpose, gives wings to the soul; and this faith will continually grow, by acquainting ourselves with our own nature, and with the promises of divine help and immortal life which abound in revelation.

Some are discouraged from proposing to themselves improvement, by the false notion, that the study of books, which their situation denies them, is the all important and only sufficient means. Let such consider, that the grand volumes, of which all our books are transcripts—I mean, nature, revelation, the human soul, and human life—are freely unfolded to every eye. The great sources of wisdom are experience and observation; and these are denied to none. To open and fix our eyes upon what passes without and within us, is the most fruitful study. Books are chiefly useful, as they help us to interpret what we see and experience. When they absorb men, as they sometimes do, and turn them from observation of nature and life, they generate a learned folly, for which the plain sense of the labourer could not be exchanged but at great loss. It deserves attention, that the greatest men have been formed without the studies which at present are thought by many most needful to improvement. Homer, Plato, Demosthenes, never heard the name of chemistry, and knew less of the solar system than a boy in our common schools. Not that these sciences are unimportant; but the lesson is, that human improvement never wants the means, where the purpose of it is deep and earnest in the soul.

The purpose of self-culture, this is the life and strength of all the methods we use for our own elevation. I reiterate this principle on account of its great importance; and I would add a remark to prevent its misapprehension. When I speak of the purpose of self-culture, I mean, that it should be sincere. In other words, we must make self-culture really and truly our end, or choose it for its own sake, and not merely as a means or instrument of something else. And here I touch a common and very pernicious error. Not a few persons desire to improve themselves only to get property and to rise in the world; but such do not properly choose improvement, but something

outward and foreign to themselves; and so low an impulse can produce only a stinted, partial, uncertain growth. A man, as I have said, is to cultivate himself because he is a man. He is to start with the conviction, that there is something greater within him than in the whole material creation, than in all the worlds which press on the eye and ear; and that inward improvements have a worth and dignity in themselves, quite distinct from the power they give over outward things. Undoubtedly a man is to labour to better his condition, but first to better himself. If he knows no higher use of his mind than to invent and drudge for his body, his case is desperate as far as culture is concerned.

In these remarks, I do not mean to recommend to the labourer indifference to his outward lot. I hold it important, that every man in every class should possess the means of comfort, of health, of neatness in food and apparel, and of occasional retirement and leisure. These are good in themselves, to be sought for their own sakes; and still more, they are important means of self-culture for which I am pleading. A clean, comfortable dwelling, with wholesome meals, is no small aid to intellectual and moral progress. A man living in a damp cellar, or a garret open to rain and snow, breathing the foul air of a filthy room, and striving without success to appease hunger on scanty or unsavoury food, is in danger of abandoning himself to a desperate, selfish recklessness. Improve, then, your lot. Multiply comforts, and still more, get wealth if you can by honourable means, and if it do not cost too much. A true cultivation of the mind is fitted to forward you in your worldly concerns, and you ought to use it for this end. Only, beware, lest this end master you; lest your motives sink as your condition improves; lest you fall victims to the miserable passion of vying with those around you in show, luxury, and expense. Cherish a true respect for yourselves. Feel that your nature is worth more than everything which is foreign to you. He who has not caught a glimpse of his own rational and spiritual being, of something within himself superior to the world and allied to the Divinity, wants the true spring of that purpose of self-culture, on which I have insisted as the first of all the means of improvement.

I proceed to another important means of self-culture, and this is the control of the animal appetites. To raise the moral and intellectual nature, we must put down the animal. Sensuality is the abyss in which very many souls are plunged and lost. Among the most prosperous classes, what a vast amount of intellectual life is drowned

in luxurious excesses. It is one great curse of wealth, that it is used to pamper the senses; and among the poorer classes, though luxury is wanting, yet a gross feeding often prevails, under which the spirit is whelmed. It is a sad sight to walk through our streets, and to see how many countenances bear marks of a lethargy and a brutal coarseness, induced by unrestrained indulgence. Whoever would cultivate the soul, must restrain the appetites. I am not an advocate for the doctrine, that animal food was not made for man; but that this is used among us to excess, that as a people we should gain much in cheerfulness, activity, and buoyancy of mind, by less gross and stimulating food, I am strongly inclined to believe. Above all, let me urge on those who would bring out and elevate their higher nature, to abstain from the use of spirituous liquors. This bad habit is distinguished from all others by the ravages it makes on the reason, the intellect; and this effect is produced to a mournful extent, even when drunkenness is escaped. Not a few men, called temperate, and who have thought themselves such, have learned, on abstaining from the use of ardent spirits, that for years their minds had been clouded, impaired by moderate drinking, without their suspecting the injury. Multitudes in this city are bereft of half their intellectual energy, by a degree of indulgence which passes for innocent. Of all the foes of the working class, this is the deadliest. Nothing has done more to keep down this class, to destroy their self-respect, to rob them of their just influence in the community, to render profitless the means of improvement within their reach, than the use of ardent spirits as a drink. They are called on to withstand this practice, as they regard their honour, and would take their just place in society. They are under solemn obligations to give their sanction to every effort for its suppression. They ought to regard as their worst enemies (though unintentionally such), as the enemies of their rights, dignity, and influence, the men who desire to flood city and country with distilled poison. I lately visited a flourishing village, and on expressing to one of the respected inhabitants the pleasure I felt in witnessing so many signs of progress, he replied, that one of the causes of the prosperity I witnessed was the disuse of ardent spirits by the people. And this reformation we may be assured wrought something higher than outward prosperity. In almost every family so improved, we cannot doubt that the capacities of the parent for intellectual and moral improvement were enlarged, and the means of education made more effectual to the child. I call on working men to take hold of the cause of tempe-

rance as peculiarly *their* cause. These remarks are the more needed, in consequence of the efforts made far and wide to annul, at the present moment, a recent law for the suppression of the sale of ardent spirits in such quantities as favour intemperance. I know, that there are intelligent and good men, who believe that, in enacting this law, government transcended its limits, left its true path, and established a precedent for legislative interference with all our pursuits and pleasure. No one here looks more jealously on government than myself. But I maintain, that this is a case which stands by itself; which can be confounded with no other; and on which government, from its very nature and end, is peculiarly bound to act. Let it never be forgotten that the great end of government, its highest function, is, not to make roads, grant charters, originate improvements, but to prevent or repress crimes against individual rights and social order. For this end it ordains a penal code, erects prisons, and inflicts fearful punishments. Now if it be true, that a vast proportion of the crimes, which government is instituted to prevent and repress, have their origin in the use of ardent spirits; if our poorhouses, workhouses, gaols, and penitentiaries, are tenanted in a great degree by those, whose first and chief impulse to crime came from the distillery and dram-shop; if murder and theft, the most fearful outrages on property and life, are most frequently the issues and consummation of intemperance, is not government bound to restrain by legislation the vending of the stimulus to these terrible social wrongs? Is government never to act as a parent, never to remove the causes or occasion of wrong doing? Has it but one instrument for repressing crime, namely, public, infamous punishment, an evil only inferior to crime? Is government a usurper, does it wander beyond its sphere, by imposing restraints on an article, which does no imaginable good; which can plead no benefit conferred on body or mind; which unfits the citizen for the discharge of his duty to his country; and which, above all, stirs up men to the perpetration of most of the crimes, from which it is the highest and most solemn office of government to protect society?

I come now to another important measure of self-culture, and this is intercourse with superior minds. I have insisted on our own activity as essential to our progress: but we were not made to live or advance alone. Society is as needful to us as air or food. A child doomed to utter loneliness, growing up without sight or sound of human beings, would not put forth equal power with many brutes; and a man never brought into contact with minds superior

to his own, will probably run one and the same dull round of thought and action to the end of life.

It is chiefly through books that we enjoy intercourse with superior minds; and these invaluable means of communication are in the reach of all. In the best books, great men talk to us, give us their most precious thoughts, and pour their souls into ours. God be thanked for books! They are the voices of the distant and the dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true levellers. They give to all who will faithfully use them, the society, the spiritual presence of the best and greatest of our race. No matter how poor I am; no matter though the prosperous of my own time will not enter my obscure dwelling; if the sacred writers will enter and take up their abode under my roof—if Milton will cross my threshold to sing to me of Paradise; and Shakspeare to open to me the worlds of imagination and the workings of the human heart; and Franklin to enrich me with his practical wisdom—I shall not pine for want of intellectual companionship, and I may become a cultivated man, though excluded from what is called the best society in the place where I live.

To make this means of culture effectual, a man must select good books, such as have been written by right-minded and strong-minded men, real thinkers; who, instead of diluting by repetition what others say, have something to say for themselves, and write to give relief to full earnest souls: and these works must not be skimmed over for amusement, but read with fixed attention, and a reverential love of truth. In selecting books, we may be aided much by those who have studied more than ourselves. But, after all, it is best to be determined in this particular a good deal by our own tastes. The best books for a man are not always those which the wise recommend, but oftener those which meet the peculiar wants, the natural thirst of his mind, and therefore awaken interest and rivet thought. And here it may be well to observe, not only in regard to books, but in other respects, that self-culture must vary with the individual. All means do not equally suit us all. A man must unfold himself freely, and should respect the peculiar gifts or biasses by which nature has distinguished him from others. Self-culture does not demand the sacrifice of individuality; it does not regularly apply an established machinery, for the sake of torturing every man into one rigid shape, called perfection. As the human countenance, with the same features in us all, is diversified without end in the race, and is never the same in any two individuals; so the human soul, with the

same grand powers and laws, expands into an infinite variety of forms, and would be woefully stinted by modes of culture requiring all men to learn the same lesson, or to bend to the same rules.

I know how hard it is to some men, especially to those who spend much time in manual labour, to fix attention on books. Let them strive to overcome the difficulty, by choosing subjects of deep interest, or by reading in company with those whom they love. Nothing can supply the place of books. They are cheering or soothing companions in solitude, illness, affliction. The wealth of both continents would not compensate for the good they impart. Let every man, if possible, gather some good books under his roof, and obtain access for himself and family to some social library. Almost any luxury should be sacrificed to this.

One of the very interesting features of our times, is the multiplication of books, and their distribution through all conditions of society. At a small expense, a man can now possess himself of the most precious treasures of English literature. Books, once confined to a few by their costliness, are now accessible to the multitude; and in this way a change of habits is going on in society, highly favourable to the culture of the people. Instead of depending on casual rumour and loose conversation for most of their knowledge and objects of thought; instead of forming their judgments in crowds, and receiving their chief excitement from the voice of neighbours, men are now learning to study and reflect alone, to follow out subjects continuously, to determine for themselves what shall engage their minds, and to call to their aid the knowledge, original views, and reasonings of men of all countries and ages; and the results must be, a deliberateness and independence of judgment, and a thoroughness and extent of information, unknown in former times. The diffusion of these silent teachers, books, through the whole community, is to work greater effects than artillery, machinery, and legislation. Its peaceful agency is to supersede stormy revolutions. The culture, which it is to spread, whilst an unspeakable good to the individual, is also to become the stability of nations.

Another important means of self-culture, is to free ourselves from the power of human opinion and example, except as far as this is sanctioned by our own deliberate judgment. We are all prone to keep the level of those we live with, to repeat their words, and dress our minds as well as bodies after their fashion; and hence the spiritless tameness of our characters and lives. Our greatest

danger is not from the grossly wicked around us, but from the worldly, unreflecting multitude, who are borne along as a stream by foreign impulse, and bear us along with them. Even the influence of superior minds may harm us, by bowing us to servile acquiescence, and damping our spiritual activity. The great use of intercourse with other minds is to stir up our own, to whet our appetite for truth, to carry our thoughts beyond their old tracks. We need connexions with great thinkers to make us thinkers too. One of the chief arts of self-culture is to unite the child-like teachableness, which gratefully welcomes light from every human being who can give it, with manly resistance of opinions however current, of influences however generally revered, which do not approve themselves to our deliberate judgment. You ought indeed patiently and conscientiously to strengthen your reason by other men's intelligence, but you must not prostrate it before them. Especially if there springs up within you any view of God's word or universe, any sentiment or aspiration which seems to you of a higher order than what you meet abroad, give reverent heed to it; enquire into it earnestly, solemnly. Do not trust it blindly, for it may be an illusion; but it may be the Divinity moving within you, a new revelation, not supernatural but still most precious, of truth or duty: and if after inquiry it so appear, then let no clamour, or scorn, or desertion, turn you from it. Be true to your own highest convictions. Intimations from our own souls of something more perfect than others teach, if faithfully followed, give us a consciousness of spiritual force and progress, never experienced by the vulgar of high life or low life, who march, as they are drilled, to the step of their times.

Some, I know, will wonder that I should think the mass of the people capable of such intimations and glimpses of truth as I have just supposed. These are commonly thought to be the prerogative of men of genius, who seem to be born to give law to the minds of the multitude. Undoubtedly nature has her nobility, and sends forth a few to be eminently "lights of the world." But it is also true, that a portion of the same divine fire is given to all; for the many could not receive with a loving reverence the quickening influences of the few, were there not essentially the same spiritual life in both. The minds of the multitude are not masses of passive matter, created to receive impressions unresistingly from abroad: they are not wholly shaped by foreign instruction; but have a native force, a spring of thought in themselves. Even the child's mind outruns its lessons, and overflows in ques-

tionings which bring the wisest to a stand. Even the child starts the great problems which philosophy has laboured to solve for ages. But on this subject I cannot now enlarge. Let me only say, that the power of original thought is particularly manifested in those who thirst for progress, who are bent on unfolding their whole nature. A man who wakes up to the consciousness of having been created for progress and perfection, looks with new eyes on himself and on the world in which he lives. This great truth stirs the soul from its depths, breaks up old associations of ideas, and establishes new ones; just as a mighty agent of chemistry, brought into contact with natural substances, dissolves the old affinities which have bound their particles together, and arranges them anew. This truth particularly aids us to penetrate the mysteries of human life. By revealing to us the end of our being, it helps us to comprehend more and more the wonderful, the infinite system, to which we belong. A man in the common walks of life, who has faith in perfection, in the unfolding of the human spirit, as the great purpose of God, possesses more the secret of the universe, perceives more the harmonies or mutual adaptations of the world without and the world within him, is a wiser interpreter of Providence, and reads nobler lessons of duty in the events which pass before him, than the profoundest philosopher who wants this grand central truth. Thus illuminations, inward suggestions, are not confined to a favoured few, but visit all who devote themselves to a generous self-culture.

Another means of self-culture may be found by every man in his condition or occupation, be it what it may. Had I time, I might go through all conditions of life, from the most conspicuous to the most obscure, and might show how each furnishes continual aids to improvement. But I will take one example, and that is, of a man living by manual labour. This may be made the means of self-culture. For instance: in almost all labour, a man exchanges his strength for an equivalent in the form of wages, purchase-money, or some other product. In other words, labour is a system of contracts, bargains, imposing mutual obligations. Now the man who, in working, no matter in what way, strives perpetually to fulfil his obligations thoroughly, to do his whole work faithfully, to be honest, not because honesty is the best policy, but for the sake of justice, and that he may render to every man his due, such a labourer is continually building up in himself one of the greatest principles of morality and religion. Every blow on the anvil, on the

earth, or whatever material he works upon, contributes something to the perfection of his nature.

Nor is this all. Labour is a school of benevolence as well as justice. A man to support himself must serve others; he must do or produce something for their comfort or gratification. This is one of the beautiful ordinations of Providence, that to get a living a man must be useful. Now this usefulness ought to be an end in his labour as truly as to earn his living. He ought to think of the benefit of those he works for, as well as of his own; and in so doing, in desiring amidst his sweat and toil to serve others as well as himself, he is exercising and growing in benevolence, as truly as if he were distributing bounty with a large hand to the poor. Such a motive hallows and dignifies the commonest pursuit. It is strange that labouring men do not think more of the vast usefulness of their toils, and take a benevolent pleasure in them on this account. This beautiful city, with its houses, furniture, markets, public walks, and numberless accommodations, has grown up under the hands of artisans and other labourers; and ought they not to take a disinterested joy in their work? One would think that a carpenter or mason, on passing a house which he had reared, would say to himself, "This work of mine is giving comfort and enjoyment every day and hour to a family, and will continue to be a kindly shelter, a domestic gathering-place, an abode of affection, for a century or more after I sleep in the dust:" and ought not a generous satisfaction to spring up at the thought? It is by thus interweaving goodness with common labours, that we give it strength and make it a habit of the soul.

Again. Labour may be so performed as to be a high impulse to the mind. Be a man's vocation what it may, his rule should be to do its duties perfectly, to do the best he can, and thus to make perpetual progress in his art. In other words, Perfection should be proposed; and this I urge not only for its usefulness to society, nor for the sincere pleasure which a man takes in seeing a work well done. This is an important means of self-culture. In this way the idea of perfection takes root in the mind, and spreads far beyond the man's trade. He gets a tendency towards completeness in whatever he undertakes. Slack, slovenly performance in any department of life is more apt to offend him. His standard of action rises, and everything is better done for his thoroughness in his common vocation.

There is one circumstance attending all conditions of life, which may and ought to be turned to the use of self-

culture. Every condition, be it what it may, has hardships, hazards, pains. We try to escape them; we pine for a sheltered lot, for a smooth path, for cheering friends, and unbroken success. But Providence ordains storms, disasters, hostilities, sufferings; and the great question, whether we shall live to any purpose or not, whether we shall grow strong in mind and heart, or be weak and pitiable, depends on nothing so much as on our use of these adverse circumstances. Outward evils are designed to school our passions, and to rouse our faculties and virtues into intenser action. Sometimes they seem to create new powers. Difficulty is the element, and resistance the true work of a man. Self-culture never goes on so fast, as when embarrassed circumstances, the opposition of men or the elements, unexpected changes of the times, or other forms of suffering, instead of disheartening, throw us on our inward resources, turn us for strength to God, clear up to us the great purpose of life, and inspire calm resolution. No greatness or goodness is worth much, unless tried in these fires. Hardships are not on this account to be sought for. They come fast enough of themselves, and we are in more danger of sinking under than of needing them. But when God sends them they are noble means of self-culture, and as such let us meet and bear them cheerfully. Thus all parts of our condition may be pressed into the service of self-improvement.

I have time to consider but one more means of self-culture. We find it in our free government, in our political relations and duties. It is a great benefit of free institutions, that they do much to awaken and keep in action a nation's mind. We are told, that the education of the multitude is necessary to the support of a republic; but it is equally true, that a republic is a powerful means of educating the multitude. It is the people's university. In a free state, solemn responsibilities are imposed on every citizen; great subjects are to be discussed, great interests to be decided. The individual is called to determine measures affecting the well-being of millions and the destinies of posterity. He must consider not only the internal relations of his native land, but its connexion with foreign states, and judge of a policy which touches the whole civilized world. He is called by his participation in the national sovereignty, to cherish public spirit, a regard to the general weal. A man who purposes to discharge faithfully these obligations, is carrying on a generous self-culture. The great public questions, which divide opinion around him and provoke earnest discussion, of necessity invigorate his intellect, and accustom him to look beyond

himself. He grows up to a robustness, force, enlargement of mind, unknown under despotic rule.

It may be said that I am describing what free institutions ought to do for the character of the individual, not their actual effects; and the objection, I must own, is too true. Our institutions do not cultivate us, as they might and should; and the chief cause of the failure is plain. It is the strength of party spirit; and so blighting is its influence, so fatal to self-culture, that I feel myself bound to warn every man against it who has any desire of improvement. I do not tell you it will destroy your country: it wages a worse war against yourselves. Truth, justice, candour, fair dealing, sound judgment, self-control, and kind affections, are its natural and perpetual prey.

I do not say that you must take no side in politics. The parties which prevail around you differ in character, principles, and spirit, though far less than the exaggeration of passion affirms; and, as far as conscience allows, a man should support that which he thinks best. In one respect, however, all parties agree: they all foster that pestilent spirit, which I now condemn. In all of them, party spirit rages. Associate men together for a common cause, be it good or bad, and array against them a body resolutely pledged to an opposite interest, and a new passion, quite distinct from the original sentiment which brought them together; a fierce, fiery zeal, consisting chiefly of aversion to those who differ from them, is roused within them into fearful activity. Human nature seems incapable of a stronger, more unrelenting passion. It is hard enough for an individual, when contending all alone for an interest or an opinion, to keep down his pride, wilfulness, love of victory, anger, and other personal feelings. But let him join a multitude in the same warfare, and, without singular self-control, he receives into his single breast the vehemence, obstinacy, and vindictiveness of all. The triumph of his party becomes immeasurably dearer to him than the principle, true or false, which was the original ground of division. The conflict becomes a struggle, not for principle but for power, for victory; and the desperateness, the wickedness of such struggles, is the great burden of history. In truth, it matters little what men divide about, whether it be a foot of land or precedence in a procession. Let them but begin to fight for it, and self-will, ill-will, the rage for victory, the dread of mortification and defeat, makes the trifle as weighty as a matter of life and death. The Greek or Eastern Empire was shaken to its foundation by parties, which differed only about the merits of charioteers at the amphitheatre. Party spirit is

singularly hostile to moral independence. A man, in proportion as he drinks into it, sees, hears, judges by the senses and understandings of his party. He surrenders the freedom of a man, the right of using and speaking his own mind, and echoes the applauses or maledictions, with which the leaders or passionate partisans see fit that the country should ring. On all points parties are to be distrusted, but on no one so much as on the character of opponents. These, if you may trust what you hear, are always men without principle and truth, devoured by selfishness, and thirsting for their own elevation, though on their country's ruin. When I was young, I was accustomed to hear pronounced with abhorrence, almost with execration, the names of men, who are now hailed by their former foes as the champions of grand principles, and as worthy of the highest public trusts. This lesson of early experience, which later years have corroborated, will never be forgotten.

Of our present political divisions I have, of course, nothing to say. But among the current topics of party, there are certain accusations and recriminations, grounded on differences of social condition, which seem to me so unfriendly to the improvement of individuals and the community, that I ask the privilege of giving them a moment's notice. On one side we are told, that the rich are disposed to trample on the poor; and on the other, that the poor look with evil eye and hostile purpose on the possessions of the rich. These outcries seem to me alike devoid of truth and alike demoralizing. As for the rich, who constitute but a handful of our population, who possess not one peculiar privilege, and, what is more, who possess comparatively little of the property of the country, it is wonderful that they should be objects of alarm. The vast and ever-growing property of this country, where is it? Locked up in a few hands? hoarded in a few strong boxes? It is diffused like the atmosphere, and almost as variable; changing hands with the seasons, shifting from rich to poor, not by the violence but by the industry and skill of the latter class. The wealth of the rich is as a drop in the ocean; and it is a well-known fact, that those men among us, who are noted for their opulence, exert hardly any political power on the community. That the rich do their whole duty; that they adopt, as they should, the great object of the social state, which is the elevation of the people in intelligence, character, and condition, cannot be pretended; but that they feel for the physical sufferings of their brethren, that they stretch out liberal hands for the succour of the poor, and for the

support of useful public institutions, cannot be denied. Among them are admirable specimens of humanity. There is no warrant for holding them up to suspicion as the people's foes.

Nor do I regard as less calumnious the outcry against the working classes, as if they were aiming at the subversion of property. When we think of the general condition and character of this part of our population; when we recollect, that they were born and have lived amidst schools and churches, that they have been brought up to profitable industry, that they enjoy many of the accommodations of life, that most of them hold a measure of property and are hoping for more, that they possess unprecedented means of bettering their lot, that they are bound to comfortable homes by strong domestic affections, that they are able to give their children an education which places within their reach the prizes of the social state, that they are trained to the habits, and familiarized to the advantages of a high civilization; when we recollect these things, can we imagine that they are so insanely blind to their interests, so deaf to the calls of justice and religion, so profligately thoughtless of the peace and safety of their families, as to be prepared to make a wreck of social order, for the sake of dividing among themselves the spoils of the rich, which would not support the community for a month. Undoubtedly there is insecurity in all stages of society, and so there must be, until communities shall be regenerated by a higher culture, reaching and quickening all classes of the people; but there is not, I believe, a spot on earth, where property is safer than here, because, nowhere else is it so equally and righteously diffused. In aristocracies, where wealth exists in enormous masses, which have been entailed for ages by a partial legislation on a favoured few, and where the multitude, after the sleep of ages, are waking up to intelligence, to self-respect, and to a knowledge of their rights, property is exposed to shocks which are not to be dreaded among ourselves. Here, indeed, as elsewhere, among the less prosperous members of the community, there are disappointed, desperate men, ripe for tumult and civil strife; but it is also true, that the most striking and honourable distinction of this country is to be found in the intelligence, character, and condition of the great working class. To me it seems, that the great danger to property here is not from the labourer, but from those who are making haste to be rich. For example: in this commonwealth, no act has been thought by the alarmists or the conservatives, so subversive of the rights of pro-

erty, as a recent law, authorizing a company to construct a free bridge, in the immediate neighbourhood of another which had been chartered by a former legislature, and which had been erected in the expectation of an exclusive right. And with whom did this alleged assault on property originate? With levellers? with needy labourers? with men bent on the prostration of the rich? No; but with men of business, who were anxious to push a more lucrative trade. Again, what occurrence among us has been so suited to destroy confidence, and to stir up the people against the moneyed class, as the late criminal mismanagement of some of our banking institutions. And whence came this? from the rich, or the poor? From the agrarian, or the man of business? Who, let me ask, carry on the work of spoliation most extensively in society? Is not more property wrested from its owners by rash or dishonest failures, than by professed highwaymen and thieves? Have not a few unprincipled speculators sometimes inflicted wider wrongs and sufferings, than all the tenants of a state prison? Thus, property is in more danger from those who are aspiring after wealth, than from those who live by the sweat of their brow. I do not believe, however, that the institution is in serious danger from either. All the advances of society in industry, useful arts, commerce, knowledge, jurisprudence, fraternal union, and practical Christianity, are so many hedges round honestly acquired wealth, so many barriers against revolutionary violence and rapacity. Let us not torture ourselves with idle alarms, and still more, let us not inflame ourselves against one another by mutual calumnies. Let not class array itself against class, where all have a common interest. One way of provoking men to crime is to suspect them of criminal designs. We do not secure our property against the poor, by accusing them of schemes of universal robbery; nor render the rich better friends of the community, by fixing on them the brand of hostility to the people. Of all parties, those founded on different social conditions are the most pernicious; and in no country on earth are they so groundless as in our own.

Among the best people, especially among the more religious, there are some who, through disgust with the violence and frauds of parties, withdraw themselves from all political action. Such, I conceive, do wrong. God has placed them in the relations, and imposed on them the duties of citizens; and they are no more authorized to shrink from these duties, than from those of sons, husbands, or fathers. They owe a great debt to their country,

and must discharge it by giving support to what they deem the best men and the best measures. Nor let them say, that they can do nothing. Every good man, if faithful to his convictions, benefits his country. All parties are kept in check by the spirit of the better portion of people whom they contain. Leaders are always compelled to ask what their party will bear, and to modify their measures, so as not to shock the men of principle within their ranks. A good man, not tamely subservient to the body with which he acts, but judging it impartially, criticising it freely, bearing testimony against its evils, and withholding his support from wrong, does good to those around him, and is cultivating generously his own mind.

I respectfully counsel those, whom I address, to take part in the politics of their country. These are the true discipline of a people, and do much for their education. I counsel you to labour for a clear understanding of the subjects which agitate the community, to make them your study, instead of wasting your leisure in vague, passionate talk about them. The time thrown away by the mass of the people on the rumours of the day, might, if better spent, give them a good acquaintance with the constitution, laws, history, and interests of their country, and thus establish them in those great principles by which particular measures are to be determined. In proportion as the people thus improve themselves, they will cease to be the tools of designing politicians. Their intelligence, not their passions and jealousies, will be addressed by those who seek their votes. They will exert, not a nominal, but a real influence on the government and the destinies of the country, and at the same time will forward their own growth in truth and virtue.

I ought not to quit this subject of politics, considered as a means of self-culture, without speaking of newspapers; because these form the chief reading of the bulk of the people. They are the literature of multitudes. Unhappily their importance is not understood; their bearing on the intellectual and moral cultivation of the community little thought of. A newspaper ought to be conducted by one of our most gifted men, and its income should be such as to enable him to secure the contributions of men as gifted as himself. But we must take newspapers as they are; and a man, anxious for self-culture, may turn them to account, if he will select the best within his reach. He should exclude from his house such as are venomous or scurrilous, as he would a pestilence: he should be swayed in his choice, not merely by the ability with which

a paper is conducted, but still more by its spirit, by its justice, fairness, and steady adherence to great principles: especially, if he would know the truth, let him hear both sides. Let him read the defence as well as the attack: let him not give his ear to one party exclusively. We condemn ourselves, when we listen to reproaches thrown on an individual, and turn away from his exculpation: and is it just to read continual, unsparing invective against large masses of men, and refuse them the opportunity of justifying themselves?

A new class of daily papers has sprung up in our country, sometimes called cent papers, and designed for circulation among those who cannot afford costlier publications. My interest in the working class induced me some time ago to take one of these, and I was gratified to find it not wanting in useful matter. Two things, however, gave me pain; the advertising columns were devoted very much to patent medicines; and when I considered that a labouring man's whole fortune is his health, I could not but lament, that so much was done to seduce him to the use of articles, more fitted, I fear, to undermine than to restore his constitution. I was also shocked by accounts of trials in the police court. These were written in a style adapted to the most uncultivated minds, and intended to turn into matters of sport the most painful and humiliating events of life. Were the newspapers of the rich to attempt to extract amusement from the vices and miseries of the poor, a cry would be raised against them, and very justly. But is it not something worse, that the poorer classes themselves should seek occasions of laughter and merriment in the degradation, the crimes, the woes, the punishments of their brethren, of those who are doomed to bear like themselves the heaviest burdens of life, and who have sunk under the temptations of poverty? Better go to the hospital, and laugh over the wounds and writhings of the sick, or the ravings of the insane, than amuse ourselves with brutal excesses and infernal passions, which not only expose the criminal to the crushing penalties of human laws, but incur the displeasure of heaven; and, if not repented of, will be followed by the fearful retribution of the life to come.

One important topic remains. That great means of self-improvement, Christianity, is yet untouched, and its greatness forbids me now to approach it. I will only say, that if you study Christianity in its original records and not in human creeds; if you consider its clear revelations of God, its life-giving promises of pardon and spiritual

strength, its correspondence to man's reason, conscience, and best affections, and its adaptation to his wants, sorrows, anxieties, and fears; if you consider the strength of its proofs, the purity of its precepts, the divine greatness of the character of its Author, and the immortality which it opens before us, you will feel yourselves bound to welcome it joyfully, gratefully, as affording aids and incitements to self-culture, which would vainly be sought in all other means.

I have thus presented a few of the means of self-culture. The topics now discussed will, I hope, suggest others to those who have honoured me with their attention, and create an interest which will extend beyond the present hour. I owe it however to truth to make one remark. I wish to raise no unreasonable hopes. I must say, then, that the means now recommended to you, though they will richly reward every man of every age who will faithfully use them, will yet not produce their full and happiest effect, except in cases where early education has prepared the mind for future improvement. They, whose childhood has been neglected, though they may make progress in future life, can hardly repair the loss of their first years; and I say this, that we may all be excited to save our children from this loss, that we may prepare them, to the extent of our power, for an effectual use of all the means of self-culture, which adult age may bring with it. With these views, I ask you to look with favour on the recent exertions of our legislature, and of private citizens, in behalf of our public schools, the chief hope of our country. The legislature has of late appointed a board of education, with a secretary, who is to devote his whole time to the improvement of public schools. An individual more fitted to this responsible office than the gentleman who now fills it,* cannot, I believe, be found in our community; and if his labours shall be crowned with success, he will earn a title to the gratitude of the good people of this state, unsurpassed by that of any other living citizen. Let me also recall to your minds a munificent individual,† who, by a generous donation, has encouraged the legislature, to resolve on the establishment of one or more institutions, called Normal Schools, the object of which is, to prepare accomplished teachers of youth: a work, on which the progress of education depends more than on any other measure. The efficient friends of education are the true benefactors of their country, and their names deserve to be handed down to that posterity, for whose highest wants they are generously providing.

* Horace Mann, Esq.

† Edmund Dwight, Esq.

There is another mode of advancing education in our whole country, to which I ask your particular attention. You are aware of the vast extent and value of the public lands of the Union: by annual sales of these, large amounts of money are brought into the national treasury, which are applied to the current expenses of the government: for this application there is no need. In truth, the country has received detriment from the excess of its revenues. Now, I ask, why should not the public lands be consecrated (in whole or in part, as the case may require,) to the education of the people? This measure would secure at once what the country most needs, that is, able, accomplished, quickening teachers of the whole rising generation. The present poor remuneration of instructors is a dark omen, and the only real obstacle which the cause of education has to contend with. We need for our schools gifted men and women, worthy, by their intelligence and their moral power, to be entrusted with a nation's youth; and to gain these we must pay them liberally, as well as afford other proofs of the consideration in which we hold them. In the present state of the country, when so many paths of wealth and promotion are opened, superior men cannot be won to an office so responsible and laborious as that of teaching, without stronger inducements than are now offered, except in some of our large cities. The office of instructor ought to rank and be recompensed as one of the most honorable in society; and I see not how this is to be done, at least in our day, without appropriating to it the public domain. This is the people's property, and the only part of their property which is likely to be soon devoted to the support of a high order of institutions for public education. This object, interesting to all classes of society, has peculiar claims on those whose means of improvement are restricted by narrow circumstances. The mass of the people should devote themselves to it as one man, should toil for it with one soul. Mechanics, Farmers, Labourers! Let the country echo with your united cry, "The Public Lands for Education." Send to the public councils men who will plead this cause with power. No party triumphs, no trades-unions, no associations, can so contribute to elevate you as the measure now proposed. Nothing but a higher education can raise you in influence and true dignity. The resources of the public domain, wisely applied for successive generations to the culture of society and of the individual, would create a new people, would awaken through this community intellectual and moral energies, such as the records of no country display,

and as would command the respect and emulation of the civilized world. In this grand object, the working men of all parties, and in all divisions of the land, should join with an enthusiasm not to be withstood. They should separate it from all narrow and local strifes. They should not suffer it to be mixed up with the schemes of politicians. In it, they and their children have an infinite stake. May they be true to themselves, to posterity, to their country, to freedom, to the cause of mankind.

III. I am aware that the whole doctrine of this discourse will meet opposition. There are not a few who will say to me, "What you tell us sounds well; but it is impracticable. Men, who dream in their closets, spin beautiful theories; but actual life scatters them, as the wind snaps the cobweb. You would have all men to be cultivated; but necessity wills that most men shall work; and which of the two is likely to prevail. A weak sentimentality may shrink from the truth; still it is true, that most men were made, not for self-culture, but for toil."

I have put the objection into strong language, that we may all look it fairly in the face. For one, I deny its validity. Reason as well as sentiment rises up against it. The presumption is certainly very strong, that the All-wise Father, who has given to every human being, reason, and conscience, and affection, intended that these should be unfolded; and it is hard to believe, that He, who, by conferring this nature on all men, has made all his children, has destined the great majority to wear out a life of drudgery and unimproving toil, for the benefit of a few. God cannot have made spiritual beings to be dwarfed. In the body we see no organs created to shrivel by disuse; much less are the powers of the soul given to be locked up in perpetual lethargy.

Perhaps it will be replied, that the purpose of the Creator is to be gathered, not from theory, but from facts; and that it is a plain fact, that the order and prosperity of society, which God must be supposed to intend, require from the multitude the action of their hands and not the improvement of their minds. I reply, that a social order, demanding the sacrifice of the mind, is very suspicious, that it cannot indeed be sanctioned by the Creator. Were I, on visiting a strange country, to see the vast majority of the people maimed, crippled, and bereft of sight, and were I told that social order required this mutilation, I should say, Perish this order. Who would not think his understanding as well as best feelings insulted, by hearing this spoken of as the intention of God. Nor ought we to look with less aversion on a social system, which can

only be upheld by crippling and blinding the minds of the people.

But to come nearer to the point. Are labour and self-culture irreconcilable to each other. In the first place, we have seen that a man, in the midst of labour, may and ought to give himself to the most important improvements, that he may cultivate his sense of justice, his benevolence, and the desire of perfection. Toil is the school for these high principles; and we have here a strong presumption, that, in other respects, it does not necessarily blight the soul. Next we have seen, that the most fruitful sources of truth and wisdom are not books, precious as they are, but experience and observation; and these belong to all conditions. It is another important consideration, that almost all labour demands intellectual activity, and is best carried on by those who invigorate their minds; so that the two interests, toil and self-culture, are friends to each other. It is Mind, after all, which does the work of the world; so that the more there is of mind, the more work will be accomplished. A man, in proportion as he is intelligent, makes a given force accomplish a greater task, makes skill take the place of muscles, and, with less labour, gives a better product. Make men intelligent and they become inventive; they find shorter processes. Their knowledge of nature helps them to turn its laws to account, to understand the substances on which they work, and to seize on useful hints, which experience continually furnishes. It is among workmen, that some of the most useful machines have been contrived. Spread education, and, as the history of this country shows, there will be no bounds to useful inventions. You think, that a man without culture will do all the better what you call the drudgery of life. Go then to the southern plantation. There the slave is brought up to be a mere drudge. He is robbed of the rights of a man; his whole spiritual nature is starved, that he may work, and do nothing but work; and in that slovenly agriculture, in that worn out soil, in the rude state of the mechanic arts, you may find a comment on your doctrine, that by degrading men you make them more productive labourers.

But it is said, that any considerable education lifts men above their work, makes them look with disgust on their trades as mean and low, makes drudgery intolerable. I reply, that a man becomes interested in labour, just in proportion as the mind works with the hands. An enlightened farmer, who understands agricultural chemistry, the laws of vegetation, the structure of plants, the properties of manures, the influences of climate, who looks

intelligently on his work and brings his knowledge to bear on exigencies, is a much more cheerful as well as more dignified labourer, than the peasant, whose mind is akin to the clod on which he treads, and whose whole life is the same dull, unthinking, unimproving toil. But this is not all. Why is it, I ask, that we call manual labour low, that we associate with it the idea of meanness, and think that an intelligent people must scorn it? The great reason is, that, in most countries, so few intelligent people have been engaged in it. Once let cultivated men plough, and dig, and follow the commonest labourers, and ploughing, digging, and trades will cease to be mean. It is the man who determines the dignity of the occupation, not the occupation which measures the dignity of the man. Physicians and surgeons perform operations less cleanly than fall to the lot of most mechanics. I have seen a distinguished chemist covered with dust like a labourer. Still these men were not degraded. Their intelligence gave dignity to their work, and so our labourers, once educated, will give dignity to their toils. Let me add, that I see little difference in point of dignity, between the various vocations of men. When I see a clerk, spending his days in adding figures, perhaps merely copying, or a teller of a bank counting money, or a merchant selling shoes and hides, I cannot see in these occupations greater respectableness than in making leather, shoes, or furniture. I do not see in them greater intellectual activity than in several trades. A man in the field seems to have more chances of improvement in his work, than a man behind the counter, or a man driving the quill. It is the sign of a narrow mind, to imagine, as many seem to do, that there is a repugnance between the plain, coarse exterior of a labourer and mental culture, especially the more refining culture. The labourer, under his dust and sweat, carries the grand elements of humanity, and he may put forth its highest powers. I doubt not, there is as genuine enthusiasm in the contemplation of nature and in the perusal of works of genius, under a homespun garb as under finery. We have heard of a distinguished author, who never wrote so well as when he was full dressed for company. But profound thought and poetical inspiration have most generally visited men, when, from narrow circumstances or negligent habits, the rent coat and shaggy face have made them quite unfit for polished saloons. A man may see truth, and may be thrilled with beauty, in one costume or dwelling as well as another; and he should respect himself the more for the hardships under which his intellectual force has been developed.

But, it will be asked, how can the labouring classes find time for self-culture? I answer, as I have already intimated, that an earnest purpose finds time or makes time. It seizes on spare moments, and turns larger fragments of leisure to golden account. A man, who follows his calling with industry and spirit, and uses his earnings economically, will always have some portion of the day at command; and it is astonishing, how fruitful of improvement a short season becomes, when eagerly seized and faithfully used. It has often been observed, that they, who have most time at their disposal, profit by it least. A single hour in the day, steadily given to the study of an interesting subject, brings unexpected accumulations of knowledge. The improvement made by well disposed pupils in many of our country schools, which are open but three months in the year, and in our Sunday schools, which are kept but one or two hours in the week, shew what can be brought to pass by slender means. The affections, it is said, sometimes crowd years into moments, and the intellect has something of the same power. Volumes have not only been read, but written, in flying journeys. I have known a man of vigorous intellect, who had enjoyed few advantages of early education, and whose mind was almost engrossed by the details of an extensive business, but who composed a book of much original thought, in steam-boats, and on horseback; while visiting distant customers. The succession of the seasons gives to many of the working class opportunities for intellectual improvement. The winter brings leisure to the husbandman, and winter evenings to many labourers in the city. Above all, in Christian countries, the seventh day is released from toil. The seventh part of the year, no small portion of existence, may be given by almost every one to intellectual and moral culture. Why is it that Sunday is not made a more effectual means of improvement? Undoubtedly the seventh day is to have a religious character; but religion connects itself with all the great subjects of human thought, and leads to and aids the study of all. God is in nature. God is in history. Instruction in the works of the Creator, so as to reveal his perfection in their harmony, beneficence, and grandeur; instruction in the histories of the church, and the world, so as to shew in all events his moral government, and to bring out the great moral lessons in which human life abounds; instruction in the lives of philanthropists, of saints, of men eminent for piety and virtue; all these branches of teaching enter into religion, and are appropriate to Sunday; and through these, a vast amount of

knowledge may be given to the people. Sunday ought not to remain the dull and fruitless season that it now is to multitudes. It may be clothed with a new interest, and a new sanctity. It may give a new impulse to the nation's soul. I have thus shewn, that time may be found for improvement; and the fact is, that among our most improved people, a considerable part consist of persons, who pass the greatest portion of every day at the desk, in the counting-room, or in some other sphere, chained to tasks which have very little tendency to expand the mind. In the progress of society, with the increase of machinery, and with other aids which intelligence and philanthropy will multiply, we may expect that more and more time will be redeemed from manual labour, for intellectual and social occupations.

But some will say, "Be it granted that the working classes may find some leisure; should they not be allowed to spend it in relaxation? Is it not cruel, to summon them from toils of the hand to toils of the mind? They have earned pleasure by the day's toil and ought to partake it." Yes, let them have pleasure. Far be it from me to dry up the fountains, to blight the spots of verdure, where they refresh themselves after life's labours. But I maintain, that self-culture multiplies and increases their pleasures; that it creates new capacities of enjoyment; that it saves their leisure from being, what it too often is, dull and wearisome; that it saves them from rushing for excitement to indulgences destructive to body and soul. It is one of the great benefits of self-improvement, that it raises a people above the gratifications of the brute, and gives them pleasures worthy of men. In consequence of the present intellectual culture of our country, imperfect as it is, a vast amount of enjoyment is communicated to men, women, and children, of all conditions, by books, an enjoyment unknown to ruder times. At this moment, a number of gifted writers are employed in multiplying entertaining works. Walter Scott, a name conspicuous among the brightest of his day, poured out his inexhaustible mind in fictions, at once so sportive and thrilling, that they have taken their place among the delights of all civilized nations. How many millions have been chained to his pages! How many melancholy spirits has he steeped in forgetfulness of their cares and sorrows! What multitudes, wearied by their day's work, have owed some bright evening hours and balmier sleep to his magical creations! And not only do fictions give pleasure: in proportion as the mind is cultivated, it takes delight in history and biography, in descriptions of nature, in travels, in

poetry, and even graver works. Is the labourer then defrauded of pleasure by improvement? There is another class of gratifications to which self-culture introduces the mass of the people. I refer to lectures, discussions, meetings of associations for benevolent and literary purposes, and to other like methods of passing the evening, which every year is multiplying among us. A popular address from an enlightened man, who has the tact to reach the minds of the people, is a high gratification, as well as a source of knowledge. The profound silence in our public halls, where these lectures are delivered to crowds, shews that cultivation is no foe to enjoyment. I have a strong hope, that by the progress of intelligence, taste, and morals, among all portions of society, a class of public amusements will grow up among us, bearing some resemblance to the theatre, but purified from the gross evils which degrade our present stage, and which, I trust, will seal its ruin. Dramatic performances and recitations are means of bringing the mass of the people into a quicker sympathy with a writer of genius, to a profounder comprehension of his grand, beautiful, touching conceptions, than can be effected by the reading of the closet. No commentary throws such a light on a great poem, or any impassioned work of literature, as the voice of a reader, or speaker, who brings to the task a deep feeling of his author, and rich and various powers of expression. A crowd, electrified by a sublime thought, or softened into a humanizing sorrow, under such a voice, partake a pleasure at once exquisite and refined; and I cannot but believe, that this and other amusements, at which the delicacy of woman and the purity of the Christian can take no offence, are to grow up under a higher social culture. Let me only add, that in proportion as culture spreads among a people, the cheapest and commonest of all pleasures—conversation, increases in delight. This, after all, is the great amusement of life; cheering us round our hearths, often cheering our work, stirring our hearts gently, acting on us like the balmy air or the bright light of heaven, so silently and continually, that we hardly think of its influence. This source of happiness is too often lost to men of all classes for want of knowledge, mental activity, and refinement of feeling: and do we defraud the labourer of his pleasure, by recommending to him improvements which will place the daily, hourly, blessings of conversation within his reach?

I have thus considered some of the common objections which start up when the culture of the mass of men is insisted on, as the great end of society. For myself,

these objections seem worthy little notice. The doctrine is too shocking to need refutation, that the great majority of human beings, endowed as they are with rational and immortal powers, are placed on earth, simply to toil for their own animal subsistence, and to minister to the luxury and elevation of the few. It is monstrous, it approaches impiety, to suppose that God has placed insuperable barriers to the expansion of the free illimitable soul. True, there are obstructions in the way of improvement. But in this country, the chief obstructions lie, not in our lot, but in ourselves, not in outward hardships, but in our worldly and sensual propensities; and one proof of this is, that a true self-culture is as little thought of on exchange as in the workshop, as little among the prosperous as among those of narrower conditions. The path to perfection is difficult to men in every lot; there is no royal road for rich or poor. But difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict. And how much has it already overcome? Under what burdens of oppression has it made its way for ages! What mountains of difficulty has it cleared! And with all this experience, shall we say, that the progress of the mass of men is to be despaired of, that the chains of bodily necessity are too strong and ponderous to be broken by the mind, that servile, unimproving drudgery is the unalterable condition of the multitude of the human race?

I conclude, with recalling to you the happiest feature of our age; and that is, the progress of the mass of the people in intelligence, self-respect, and all the comforts of life. What a contrast does the present form with past times! Not many ages ago, the nation was the property of one man, and all its interests were staked in perpetual games of war, for no end but to build up his family, or to bring new territories under his yoke. Society was divided into two classes, the highborn and the vulgar, separated from one another by a great gulph, as impassable as that between the saved and the lost. The people had no significance as individuals, but formed a mass, a machine, to be wielded at pleasure by their lords. In war, which was the great sport of the times, those brave knights, of whose prowess we hear, cased themselves and their horses in armour, so as to be almost invulnerable, whilst the common people on foot were left, without protection, to be hewn in pieces or trampled down by their betters. Who, that compares the condition of Europe a few ages ago, with the present state of the world, but must bless God for the change. The grand distinction of modern times is the

emerging of the people from brutal degradation; the gradual recognition of their rights, the gradual diffusion among them of the means of improvement and happiness; the creation of a new power in the state, the power of the people. And it is worthy remark, that this revolution is due in a great degree to religion, which, in the hands of the crafty and aspiring, had bowed the multitude to the dust, but which, in the fulness of time, began to fulfil its mission of freedom. It was religion, which, by teaching men their near relation to God, awakened in them the consciousness of their importance as individuals. It was the struggle for religious rights, which opened men's eyes to all their rights. It was resistance to religious usurpation, which led men to withstand political oppression. It was religious discussion, which roused the minds of all classes to free and vigorous thought. It was religion, which armed the martyr and patriot in England against arbitrary power, which braced the spirits of our fathers against the perils of the ocean and wilderness, and sent them to found here the freest and most equal state on earth.

Let us thank God for what has been gained : but let us not think every thing gained. Let the people feel that they have only started in the race. How much remains to be done ! What a vast amount of ignorance, intemperance, coarseness, sensuality, may still be found in our community ! What a vast amount of mind is palsied and lost ! When we think, that every house might be cheered by intelligence, disinterestedness, and refinement, and then remember, in how many houses the higher powers and affections of human nature are buried as in tombs, what a darkness gathers over society ! And how few of us are moved by this moral desolation ? How few understand, that to raise the depressed, by a wise culture, to the dignity of men, is the highest end of the social state ? Shame on us, that the worth of a fellow-creature is so little felt.

I would that I could speak with an awakening voice to the people, of their wants, their privileges, their responsibilities. I would say to them, You cannot, without guilt and disgrace, stop where you are. The past and the present call on you to advance. Let what you have gained be an impulse to something higher. Your nature is too great to be crushed : you were not created what you are, merely to toil, eat, drink, and sleep, like the inferior animals. If you will, you can rise. No power in society, no hardship in your condition can depress you, keep you down, in knowledge, power, virtue, influence, but by your own consent. Do not be lulled to sleep by

the flatteries which you hear, as if your participation in the national sovereignty made you equal to the noblest of your race. You have many and great deficiencies to be remedied; and the remedy lies, not in the ballot-box, not in the exercise of your political powers, but in the faithful education of yourselves and your children. These truths you have often heard and slept over. Awake! Resolve earnestly on Self-culture. Make yourselves worthy of your free institutions, and strengthen and perpetuate them by your intelligence and your virtues.

THE END.

sent A. Dwyckinck
REMARKS *May 1839.*

ON THE

SLAVERY QUESTION,

IN A LETTER

TO

JONATHAN PHILLIPS, ESQ.

BY W. E. CHANNING.

LONDON:

**WILEY AND PUTNAM, 35, AND CHARLES FOX, 67,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.**

1839.



LONDON:
PALMER & CLAYTON, Printers,
8, Crane Court,

LETTER.

MY DEAR SIR,

ON reading Mr. Clay's speech on Slavery, many thoughts were suggested to me which I wished to communicate; and our conversation of last evening confirmed me in the purpose of laying them before the public. I have resolved to give my views in the form of a letter, because I can do my work more easily and rapidly in this way than in any other. A general, methodical discussion of the subject would be more agreeable to me; but we must do what we can. I must write in haste, or not at all. If others would take the subject in hand, I should gladly be silent. Something ought to be spoken on the occasion; but who will speak? My range of topics will be somewhat large; nor, if good can be done, shall I hesitate to stray beyond the document which first suggested this communication.

I shall often be obliged to introduce the name of Mr. Clay; but, as you will see, I regard him in this discussion, simply as the representative of a body of men, simply as having given wide circulation to a set of opinions. I have nothing to do with his motives. It is common to ascribe the efforts of politicians to selfish aims. But why mix up the man with the cause? In general, we do well to let an opponent's motives alone. We are seldom just to them. Our own motives on such occasions, are often worse than those we assail. Besides, our business is with the arguments, not the character of an adversary. A speech is not refuted by imputations, true or false, on the speaker. There is indeed a general presumption against a politician's purity of purpose; but public men differ in character as much as private; and when a statesman

holds an honourable place in his class, and brings high gifts to a discussion, he ought to be listened to with impartiality and respect. For one, I desire that slavery should be defended by the ablest men among its upholders. In the long run, truth is aided by nothing so much as by opposition, and by the opposition of those who can give the full strength of the argument on the side of error. In an age of authority and spiritual bondage, the opinions of an individual are often important, sometimes decisive. One voice may determine the judgment of a country. But in an age of free discussion, little is to be feared from great names, on whatever side arrayed. When I hear a man complaining, that some cause, which he has at heart, will be put back for years by a speech or a book, I suspect that his attachment to it is a prejudice, that he has no consciousness of standing on a rock. The more discussion the better, if passion and personality be eschewed; and discussion, even if stormy, often winnows truth from error—a good never to be expected in an unenquiring age.

I have said, that my concern is wholly with Mr. Clay's speech, not with the author; and I would add, that in the greater part of the discussion which is to follow, my concern will be with slavery and not with the slaveholder. Principles, not men, are what I wish to examine and judge. For the sake of truth and good temper, personalities are to be shunned as far as they may. I shall speak strongly of slavery, for we serve neither truth nor virtue by pruning discourse into tameness; but a criminal institution does not necessarily imply any singular criminality in those who uphold it. An institution, the growth of barbarous times, transmitted from distant ages, and "sanctified" by the laws, is a very different thing, as far as the character of its friends is concerned, from what it would be, were it deliberately adopted at the present day. I must indeed ascribe much culpableness to the body of slaveholders, just as I see much to blame in political parties; but do I therefore set down all the members of these classes as unprincipled men? The injustice, criminality, inhumanity of a practice we can judge. The guilt

of our neighbour we can never weigh with exactness; and in most cases must refer him to a higher tribunal. This I say, that I may separate the subject from personalities. To me, the slaveholder is very much an abstraction. The word as here used expresses a general relation. The individual seldom or never enters my thoughts.

The principal part of Mr. Clay's speech is an attack on the Abolitionists. These I have no thought of defending. They must fight their own battle. I am not of them, and nothing would induce me to become responsible for their movements. And this I say from no desire to shift from myself an unpopular name. It will be seen in the course of these remarks, that I am not studying to soothe prejudice or to make a compromise with error. I separate myself from the Abolitionists from no sensitiveness to reproach. A man, who has studied Christianity and history as long as you and myself, will not be very anxious to shelter himself from what has been the common lot of the friends of truth. However the Abolitionists may have erred, I honour them as advocates of the principles of freedom, justice, and humanity, and for having clung to these amidst threats, perils, and violence. In declining all connexion with them, I am influenced by no desire to make over to others all the censures and invectives of the community; but I simply wish to take my true position, to appear what I am.

Mr. Clay's speech, however intended for the Abolitionists, contains passages at which every man interested in the removal of slavery must take offence; and to these my remarks will be confined. The most important part of it, indeed, has no special bearing on the Abolitionists, but concerns equally all the free States. I refer to that in which we are told, that slavery is to be perpetual, that we have nothing to hope in this respect from the South. Every other part of the speech sinks into insignificance in comparison with this. Coming from any other man, this document would be less important. But Mr. Clay is no rash talker. His legislative course has been distinguished by nothing so much as by his skill in compro-

mising discordant opinions. His speech was meant to be a compromise, to exert a healing power. He does not, in a fit of transient, blinding anger, dash to the ground our hopes of relief from the intolerable evils of slavery. He states deliberately the grand obstacle to emancipation, and it is one which can only be removed by the dying out of the slaves. He takes the ground, that if the two races are to live together, one must be hopelessly subjugated to the other, so as to prevent collision. Emancipation, he gives us to understand, would be a signal for civil war, to end only in extermination. And as this peril, if real, increases with the increase of the servile class, of consequence every year's continuance of the evil makes freedom, if possible, more and more impossible. We lament and abhor this doctrine, but are truly glad that it is brought out distinctly, that the free States may know what they are to expect. A vague hope has floated before many minds, that this immense evil was in some way or other to cease. On this ground, such of us in the free States as have written against slavery have been rebuked. Our friends as well as foes have said, "Be quiet; let the South alone; it will find for itself the way of emancipation. You throw back the good work a century." We have all along known better. We have known that long use, the love of property, and the love of power, had bound this evil on the South, with a triple adamant chain. We have known, that the increasing culture of cotton was spreading slavery with immense rapidity through new regions, and, by rendering it more gainful, was strengthening the obstinacy with which it is grasped by the owner. We have known, that in consequence of this culture, the northern slave States, whose soil the system had exhausted, have acquired a new interest in it, by humbling themselves to the condition of slave-breeding and slave-trading communities. We have seen that the institution, if to be shaken or subverted, was to be stormed from abroad, not by "carnal weapons," not by physical force, but by those moral influences, which, if steadily poured in upon a civilized people, must gradually prevail. It is now seen that we were right. It

is now plain that the South has deliberately wedded itself to slavery. We are glad to have it known. The speech publishing this doctrine was meant to be a herald of peace, but it is in truth a summons to new conflict. It calls those who regard slavery as a grievous outrage on human nature, to spread their convictions with unremitting energy. I take the ground, that no communities, unless cutting themselves off from the civilized world, can withstand just, enlightened, earnest opinion; and this power must be brought to bear on slavery more zealously than ever.

I observe, in passing, that Mr. Clay, in giving us no hope for the extinction of slavery but in the extinction of the coloured race, puts an end to all expectation of aid in this respect from the Colonization Society, an institution of which he is an ardent friend, and, for aught I know, is now the President; and I trust his frankness will open the eyes of those who dream of removing slavery by the process of draining it off to another country; a process about as reasonable as that of draining the Atlantic. Colonization may do good in Africa. It does only harm among ourselves. It has confirmed the prejudice, to which slavery owes much of its strength, that the coloured man cannot live and prosper as a freeman on these shores. It indeed sends out to the public now and then, accounts of planters who have freed a greater or less number of slaves to be shipped to Africa. But these very operations strengthen slavery at home. Could the master send his plantation to Africa with his slaves, he would serve the cause of freedom. But the land remains here, and remains to be tilled; and by whom must the cultivation go on? by slaves. Of course new slaves must be bought. Of course the demand for slaves is increased; and the price of a man rises; and a new motive is given to the slave-breeding States to stock the market with human cattle. Thus the barbarous trade in men strikes deeper root. No; colonization darkens the prospects of humanity at home, however it may brighten them abroad. It has done much to harden the slave-holder in his purpose of holding fast his victim, and thus increases the necessity of more earnest remonstrance against slavery.

Mr. Clay of course will not allow, that the resolution of making slavery perpetual at the South, is a reason for new assaults on the system. He insists, on the contrary, with the whole South, that we, in this region, have nothing to do with the matter; that it is no concern of ours; and that to labour here for the subversion of an institution in other States, is a criminal interference. Interference is the word which has been applied to all agitation of this subject at the North; and the censure implied in the term has misled the unthinking into a vague notion, that to touch the subject here is doing wrong to the South. But I maintain, that there is a moral interference with our fellow-creatures at home and abroad, not only to be asserted as a right, but binding as a duty. This is the first topic of discussion, and its importance will induce me to treat it at large.

We are told, that the slave-holding States, in relation to this point, stand on the same ground with foreign countries, and are consequently to be treated with equal delicacy and reserve. This position I deny;—but grant it: I maintain the right of acting on foreign countries by moral means for moral ends. Suppose that there were in contact with us a foreign state, which should ordain by law, that every child, born with black hair, or darkly-shaded face, should be put to death; and suppose that every sixth child should be slaughtered by this barbarous decree. Or take the case of a community at our door, which should restore the old gladiatorial shows, and suppose that a large part of the population should perish in these execrable games. Who of us would feel himself bound to hold his peace, because these atrocities were committed beyond our boundaries? Who would say, that the tortures of the slain were no concern of ours, because not of our own parish or country? Is humanity a local feeling? Does sympathy stop at a frontier? Does the heart shrink and harden as it approximates an imaginary line on the earth's surface? Is moral indignation moved only by crimes perpetrated under your own eyes? Has duty no work to do beyond our native land? Does a man cease to be a brother by living in

another state? Is liberty nothing to us, if cloven down at a little distance? Christianity teaches different lessons. Its spirit is unconfined love. One of its grandest truths is human brotherhood. Under its impulses, Christians send the preacher of the cross to distant countries, to war with deep-rooted institutions. The spiritual ties which bind all men together, were not woven by human policy, nor can statesmen sunder them.

Suppose that one of the States of the Union should become pledged by its institutions to intemperance, that its laws should be framed to encourage the production and consumption of ardent spirits. Would not every other State be bound to give utterance to its detestation of this horrible system? Suppose that temperance societies, in their anxiety to purify this sink of corruption, should make its excesses and crimes their standing themes. Who of us would recognise the right of the intemperate state to repel this interference as an assault on its sovereignty? What should we think, were this community to insist, that it would not suffer its character to be traduced, or the product on which its wealth and revenues depended to be diminished, and that it would recede from the Union unless permitted to manufacture and drink alcohol unreprieved? These questions answer themselves. But I shall undoubtedly be asked, whether intemperance and slavery be parallel cases. They are parallel as viewed in relation to my object, which is, not to weigh the guilt of different crimes, but to establish a general principle, to establish the right and duty of men to oppose the force of moral reprobation to prevalent moral evils, whether in our own or other countries. In regard to the comparative guilt of intemperance and slavery, I will only say, that the last involves the worst evil of the first; that is, it does much to degrade men into brutes. There is, however, this difference; the intemperate man degrades himself, the slave-holder degrades his fellow-creatures. Which of the two is most culpable in the sight of God, let every man judge.

The position is false, that nation has no right to interfere

morally with nation. Every community is responsible to other communities for its laws, habits, character; not responsible in the sense of being liable to physical punishment and force, but in the sense of just exposure to reprobation and scorn; and this moral control communities are bound to exercise over each other, and must exercise over each other, and exercise it more and more in proportion to the spread of intelligence and civilization. The world is governed much more by opinion than by laws. It is not the judgment of courts, but the moral judgment of individuals and masses of men, which is the chief wall of defence round property and life. With the progress of society, this power of opinion is taking the place of arms. Rulers are more and more anxious to stand acquitted before their peers and the human race. National honour, once in the keeping of the soldier, is understood more and more to rest on the character of nations. In this state of the world, all attempts of the slave-holder to put to silence the condemning voice of men, whether far or near, are vain.

I claim the right of pleading the cause of the oppressed, whether he suffer in this country or another. I utterly deny, that a people can screen themselves behind their nationality from the moral judgment of the world. Because they form themselves into a state, and forbid within their bounds a single voice to rise in behalf of the injured; because they crush the weak under the forms of law, do they hereby put a seal on the lips of foreigners? Do they disarm the moral sentiment of other states? Is this among the rights of sovereignty, that a people, however criminal, shall stand unreprieved?

In consequence of the increasing intercourse and intelligence of modern times, there is now erected in the civilized world, a grand moral tribunal, before which all communities stand, and must be judged. As yet, its authority is feeble compared with what it is to be, but still strong enough to lay restraint, to inspire fear. Before this, slaveholding communities are arraigned, and must answer. The friends of justice, liberty, and humanity, accuse them of

grievous wrongs. It is vain to talk of the prescription of two hundred years. Within this space of time, great changes have taken place in the code by which the commonwealth of nations passes sentence. The doctrine of human rights has been expounded. The right of the labourer to wages, the right of every innocent man to his own person, the right of all to equality before the laws—these are no longer abstractions of speculative visionaries, no longer innovations, but the established rights of humanity. Before the tribunal of the civilized world, and the higher tribunal of Christianity and of God, the slaveholder has to answer for stripping his brother of these recognised privileges and immunities of a man. Multitudes, on both sides of the ocean, looking above the distinction of nations, standing on the broad ground of a common nature, protest in the face of heaven and earth against the wrong inflicted on their ensalved brother. Let the South understand, that it is not your voice, or mine, or that of a small knot of enthusiasts, which they have to silence. You and I are nothing, but as we represent those great principles of justice and charity, with which the human heart is everywhere beginning to beat. Everywhere the slave-holder is accused; everywhere he is judged.

It is strange, that the South should tell us, that the increasing protest at the North against slavery is the greater wrong, because slavery is one of their *institutions*. As if an evil lost its deformity, by becoming an institution, that is, an established thing held up by laws and public force. One would think, that the circumstance of its being so rooted, of its having gained this fearful strength, were the very reason for vigorous opposition. A few straggling individuals, given to a bad course, might be overlooked for their insignificance. But when a community, openly, by statutes, by arms, adopts and upholds an enormous wrong, then good men, through the earth, are bound to unite against it, in stern, solemn remonstrances. The greater the force combined to support an evil, the greater the force needed for its subversion. Crime is

comparatively weak, until it embodies and "sanctifies" itself in institutions. Individuals, seizing on and enslaving their brethren, would be put down by the spontaneous, immediate reprobation of society. It is the perpetration of this wrong by communities which makes it formidable; and I confess that here, if anywhere, a justification may be found for organized associations against slavery. This evil rests on associated strength, on the prostitution of the powers of the state. Regarded as an institution, which combined millions uphold, it seems to have a strength, a permanence, against which individual power can avail nothing; and hence it may be said, strength is to be sought in associations. The argument does not satisfy me; for I believe that to produce moral changes of judgment and feeling, the individual in the long run is stronger than combinations; but I do feel that slavery, entrenched behind institutions, is on that very account to be assailed with all the weapons of reason, of moral suasion, of moral reprobation, which good men can wield. Less mercy should be shown it, because it is an institution.

The notion that I have combated, that slavery is to be treated with respect because it is a public ordinance, is one of many proofs that, even yet, there is but a faint consciousness of the existence of an everlasting and immutable rule of right. Multitudes, even now, know no higher authority than human government. They think, that a number of men, perhaps little honoured as individuals for intelligence and virtue, are yet competent, when collected into a legislature, to create right and wrong. The most immoral institutions thus gain a sanctity from law. To the laws we are indeed bound to submit, in the sense of abstaining from physical resistance; but we are under no obligation to bow to them our moral judgment, our free thoughts, our free speech. What! Is conscience to stoop from its supremacy, and to become an echo of the human magistrate? Is the law, written by God's finger on the human heart, placed at the mercy of interested statesmen? Is it not one of the chief marks of social progress, that men are coming to recognise immutable

principles, to understand the independence of truth and duty on human will, on the sovereignty of the state, whether lodged in one or many hands?

You and I, Sir, observe the golden rule concerning Southern slavery. We do to our neighbour what we wish our neighbour to do to us. We expose, as we can, the crimes and cruelties of other States, and we ask of other States the same freedom towards our own. If, in the opinion of the civilized world, or of any portion of it, we of this Commonwealth are robbing men of their dearest rights, and treading them in the dust, let the wrong be proclaimed far and wide. If good men anywhere believe, that here the weak are at the mercy of the strong, and the poor are denied the protection of the laws, then let them make every State in the Union ring with indignant rebuke. Especially if a giant evil is here incorporated with our civil institutions, upheld by the public force, so that the sufferers are made dumb, so that they endure the last wrong in being forbidden to speak of their wrongs, then, we say, let humanity beyond our borders take hold of their cause. If the oppressed are muzzled here, let the lips of the free elsewhere give voice to their wrongs.

In the preceding remarks, I have gone on the supposition, that the slave-holding States, as far as slavery is concerned, stand to the other States on the footing of foreign countries, and have shown, that if we make them this concession, our right of remonstrance against this institution is untouched. But this concession is ungrounded, unjust. The free and slave States are one nation, and have a very different connexion with one another from their connexion with foreign communities. Slavery is not the affair of a part only, but of the whole. The free States are concerned in it, and of necessity act on it and are acted on by it. We of the North sustain intimate relations to slavery, which make us partakers of its guilt, and which of course bind us to use every lawful means for its subversion. This I shall attempt to establish.

If we look first at the district of Columbia, we have a proof how deeply the free States are implicated by their

contact with the slave-holding. I do not refer now to the reproach fixed on the whole people, by the open, allowed existence of bondage at the seat of government. This is evil enough, especially if we add that the district of Columbia, besides this contamination, is one of the chief slave-markets in the country; so that strangers, foreign ministers, men whose reports of us determine our rank in the civilized world, associate with us the enormities of the slave-trade and of slave-auctions as among our chief distinctions. This is bad enough for a community which has any respect for character. But there is a greater evil. The district of Columbia fastens on the whole nation the guilt of slave-holding. We at the North uphold it as truly as the South. That district belongs to no state, but to the nation. It is governed by the nation, and with as ample powers as are possessed by any state government. Its laws and institutions exist through the national will. Every legal act owes its authority to Congress. Of consequence, the slavery of the district is upheld by the nation. Not a slave is sold or whipped there, but by the sanction of the whole people. The slave code of the district admits of mitigations; and this code remains unmodified through the national will. The guilt of the institution thus lies at the door of every man in the United States, unless he purge himself of it by solemn petition and remonstrance against the evil. What! have the free States nothing to do with slavery? This moment they are giving it active support.

And here it is interesting and instructive to observe, how soon and naturally retribution follows crime. We uphold slavery in the district of Colombia; and this is beginning to trench on our own freedom. It is making of no effect the right of petition, a right founded not on convention and charters, but on nature, and granted even by despots to their subjects. The pretext on which the petitions for the abolition of slavery in Columbia have been denied the common attention by Congress, is not even specious. The right of Congress to perform the act for which the petitioners pray is undoubted. It may be said to have

been demonstrated.* Why, then, are the memorials of a free people on this subject treated with a scorn, to which no others are subjected? It is pretended, that the petitioners are aiming at an object which the constitution places beyond the power of Congress, that they are seeking through this action in the district to abolish slavery in the States. To this, two replies at once occur. The first is, that among the petitioners, who hope by acting on the district to reach slavery everywhere, there is not one who has not also another object, which is the well-being of the district, or the abolition of slavery in it for its own sake. Allowing one of their ends to be unwarrantable, they distinctly propose another end, which the constitution sanctions. A second reply is, that it is not true of all who have petitioned for the abolition of slavery in the district, that they have aimed, in this way, at the abolition of it in the States. I have signed these petitions, I know not how often, and in so doing, was in no degree moved by this consideration. I was governed by other motives. I wished the district to be purified from a great evil. I wished the nation to be freed from the responsibility of ordaining and upholding slavery. I wished also by some public act to wash my own hands of this guilt. I felt myself bound to declare, that if this nation uphold slavery, I am clear of it. And I hold it the duty of every man in the free States, who regards this institution as I do, to bear the same testimony against it, and, by solemn remonstrance to Congress, to purge his conscience of the nation's crime. As for myself, I could petition against slavery in the district as a means of abolishing it in the States; for as I have again and again declared, I can see but little connexion between these measures. Be this as it may, by sanctioning an acknowledged wrong at the seat of government, we have provoked a blow at our own privileges. In the original draught of the constitution, the right of petition was not referred to, for no one dreamed

* See a pamphlet on the Abolition of Slavery in the district of Columbia, by *Wythe*. This is one of the ablest pamphlets from the American press. It is ascribed to Theodore Weld.

of its ever being questioned. Massachusetts, however, not satisfied with its foundation in nature and reason, chose to place it under the protection of the constitution. What this right is, we must judge from usage, and from its own nature and end. Thus interpreted, has it not been infringed by the power of slavery?*

I have now considered one important relation of the free States to slavery, that which grows out of the district of Columbia. I now proceed to another. The constitution requires the free States to send back to bondage the fugitive slave. Does this show that we have no concern with the domestic institutions of the South? that the guilt of them, if such there be, is wholly theirs, and in no degree ours? This clause makes us direct partakers of the guilt; and, of consequence, we have a vital interest in the matter of slavery. I know no provision of the constitution at which my moral feelings revolt, but this. Has not the slave a right to fly from bondage? Who among us doubts it? Let any man ask himself, how he should construe his rights, were he made a slave; and does he not receive an answer from his own moral nature, as bright, immediate, and resistless, as lightning? And yet we of the free States stop the flying slave, and give him back to bondage! It does not satisfy me to be told, that this is a part of that sacred instrument, the constitution, which all are solemnly bound to uphold. No charter of man's writing can sanctify injustice, or repeal God's Eternal Law. I cannot escape the conviction, that every man who aids the restoration of the flying slave is a wrong-doer, though this is done by our best and wisest men with no self-reproach. To send him from a free State into bondage, seems to me much the same thing as to transport him from Africa to the West Indies or this country. I shall undoubtedly be told, that the fugitive is a slave by the laws of territory from which he escapes. But when laws are acknowledged violations of the most sacred rights, we cannot innocently be active in replacing men under their cruel power. The slave goes back not merely to toil and sweat for his master as before: he goes to be lacerated for the offence of flying

* See note A.

from oppression. For hardly any crime is the slave so scored and scarred as for running away; and for every lash that enters his flesh, we, of the free States who have given him back, must answer.

I know perfectly how these views will be received at the North and South. Some will call me a visionary, while more will fix on me a harder name. But I look above scoffers and denouncers to that pure, serene, almighty Justice, which is enthroned in heaven, and enquire of God, the Father of us all, whether he approves the surrender of the flying slave. I shall be charged with irreverence towards the fathers of the Revolution, the framers of our glorious national charter. But I reply, that, great as they were, they were fallible, and that the progress of opinion since their day, seems to me to have convicted them of error in the matter now in hand. I am aware, too, that good and wise men, friends who are dear to me, will disapprove my free, strong language. But I must be faithful to the strong moral conviction which I cannot escape on this subject. If I am right, the truth which I speak, however questioned now, will not have been spoken in vain. To-day is not for ever. The men who now scorn or condemn, are not to live for ever. Let a few years pass, and we shall all have vanished, and other actors will fill the stage, and the despised and neglected truths of this generation will become the honoured ones of the next.

Before quitting this topic, it may be well just to glance at the reasoning by which my views will be assailed. To the exposition of duty now given it will be objected, that the morality of the closet is not the morality of real life; that there is danger of pushing principles to extremes; that difficulties are to be grappled with in the conduct of public affairs, which retired men cannot understand; that there must be a compromise between the Ideal and the Actual; and that our rigid rules must be softened or bend, when consequences, unusually serious, will attend their observance. These common-places are not wholly without truth. Morality is sometimes turned, by inexperienced men, into rant and romance. Solitary dreamers, exalting

imagination above reason and conscience, make life a stage for playing showy, dazzling parts, which pass with them for beautiful or heroic. I have little more sympathy with these over-refined, sublimated moralists, than with the common run of coarse, low-minded politicians. Duty is something practicable, something within reach, and which approves itself to us, not in moments of feverish excitement, but of deliberate thought. Good sense, which is another name for that calm, comprehensive reason which see things as they are, and looks at all the circumstances and consequences of actions, is as essential to the moral direction of life, as in merely prudential concerns. Still more, there is a large class of actions, the relations of which are so complicated, and the consequences so obscure, that individual judgment is at fault, and we are bound to acquiesce in usage, especially if long-established, because this represents to us the collective experience of the race. All this is true. But it is also true, that there are grand, fundamental, moral principles, which shine with their own light, which approve themselves to the reason, conscience, and heart, and which have gathered strength and sanctity from the experience of nations and individuals through all ages. These are never to be surrendered to the urgency of the moment, however pressing, or to imagined interests of individuals or states. Let these be sacrificed to hope or fear, and our foundation is gone, our anchor slipped. We have no fixtures in our own souls, nothing to rely on. No ground of faith in man is left us. Selfish, staggering policy becomes the standard of duty, the guide of life, the law of nations. Now, the question as to surrendering fugitive slaves, seems to me to fall plainly, immediately, under these great primitive truths of morality. It has no complexity about it, no mysterious elements, no obscure consequences. To send back the slave is to treat the innocent as guilty. It is to violate a plain natural right. It is to enforce a criminal claim. It is to take the side of the strong and oppressive against the weak and poor. It is to give up an unoffending fellow-creature to a degrading bondage, and to horrible laceration. The fixed universal

consequence of this act is, the severe punishment, not of the injurious, but of the injured man. On this point, my moral nature speaks strongly, and I ought to give it utterance. If I err, there are enough to refute me. My authority is nothing, where a people are against me. I ask no authority; but simply that what I say may be calmly, impartially weighed.

It will be said, that the South will insist on this stipulation because it is necessary to the support of her institutions. This necessity may be questioned, because, if I may judge from a rough estimate, comparatively few fugitives are recovered from other States; and yet slavery lives and thrives. But if the necessity be real, then it follows that the free States are the guardians and essential supports of slavery. We are the jailors and constables of the institution; and yet, we are told that we sustain no relation to slavery, that it is in no degree our concern!

I know it will be asked, what ought to be done, if the constitution bind us to an unlawful act. I reply: the individual, convinced of the unlawfulness, can have no difficulty. He must abstain from what he deems wrong. As to the community, should it ever come to the same conviction, it must take counsel from circumstances and from its wisest minds as to the course by which its peace and prosperity, and the interest of the whole land, may be reconciled with duty. Happily, the constitution may be amended, and this power is never so needed as when the conscience of the citizen comes in collision with the government. I trust that an amendment, reaching the present case, and demanded not by the passions, but by the deliberate moral judgment of a large portion of the community, will not fail. I appeal to the generosity and honor of the South, and would ask, whether we, with our views of slavery, ought to be required to give it active support? I would ask, whether, in the present state of opinion in the civilized world, a slave country ought not to protect its own institution, without looking for aid to others? I would ask, too, whether a citizen, who views the government which he sustains as pledged to wrong, deserves reproach

for labouring to bring it into harmony with truth and rectitude? Does not the constitution, in making provision for its own amendment, imply the possibility of defect, and warrant free discussion of its various clauses? What avails our liberty of speech, if, on a grave question of duty, we must hold our peace? If the citizen believes that our very constitutional charter sanctions wrong, is he not bound by his participation of the national sovereignty, by the fact of his forming a portion of the body politic, to utter his honest thought?

I proceed to consider another important relation which the North bears to slavery. We are bound, in case of an insurrection of the slaves against their masters, to put it down by force. This we ought to do, for such an insurrection would involve all the woes and crimes of civil war in the most aggravated forms, with no possibility of a beneficial result. It would be cruelty, massacre, without compensation or hope. The slaves are incapable of substituting free institutions for their bondage; and extermination or a heavier yoke would end their struggles. We ought to disarm them; but ought we to replace their chains? Ought we to put them without protection under exasperated oppressors? Ought we not to feel, that both parties in this fearful conflict have rights? and ought we not to act as friends of both? Is there nothing at which our minds revolt, in the thought of restoring unmitigated slavery; of giving back the victim to the unrestrained power, which, under a spasmodic sense of wrong, he has struggled to throw off? Should not every effort, short of physical force, be employed to obtain for him a better, a more righteous lot? But the South, as we well know, would reject such mediation with scorn. Have we not, then, painful relations to slavery? Have we not a deep interest in its abolition?

In another view the North sustains relations to slavery. Slavery is our near neighbour; and not a few among us grow hardened to it by familiarity. It perverts our moral sense. We cannot hold intimate connexion, national union, with a region where so great an abuse is legalized, and yet escape contamination. To say nothing of friendly,

domestic intercourse, our commercial relations with the slave States give to not a few a pecuniary interest in the institution. The slave is mortgaged to the northern merchant. The slaves' toil is the northern merchant's wealth, for it produces the great staple on which all the commercial dealings of the country turn. As our merchants and manufacturers cast their eyes southward, what do they see? Cotton, cotton—nothing but cotton. This fills the whole horizon of the South. What care they for the poor human tools by whom it is reared? Their sympathies are with the man with whom they deal, who trusts them and is trusted by them, and not with the bondmen, by whose sweat they thrive. What change do they desire in a system so gainful? Under these various influences, the moral feeling of the North in regard to slavery is more or less palsied. Men call it in vague language an evil, just as they call religion a good; in both cases giving assent to a lifeless form of words, which they forget whilst they utter them, and which have no power over their lives.

There is another way in which Southern slavery bears seriously on the North. It blends itself intimately with the whole political action of the country, determines its parties, decides important measures of government, is a brand of discord, a fountain of bitter strifes, and, whilst it lasts, will never suffer us to become truly one people. We call ourselves one, but slavery makes us two. National unity implies a general unity of character; but slave States and free States are severed by deep, indelible differences of mind and feeling. In the former, where one half of the population are semibarbarous or semibrutal, and the other half trained to mastery, to lordship, there can be little comprehension of, and little sympathy with, the latter, where the recognition of the equal rights of all is the prevailing principle of Government and of common life. The South, counting labour degradation, must look with contempt on the most important and influential portions of the North, that is, our great mechanic and agricultural classes. From these fundamental differences in the very constitution of society, must grow up jealousies, real and

imaginary collisions of interests, mutual dislike, mutual fear. Congress must be an arena, in which Northern and Southern parties will be arrayed against each other; and that portion of the Union, which has the strongest bond of union within itself, will, on the whole, master the other. A Northern man thinks it no hard thing to show, that slavery has chiefly ruled the country, has deeply influenced Northern commerce and manufactures, has played off Northern parties against each other, whilst a Southern man undoubtedly can produce a list of grievances in return. Thus slavery is the bane of our Union. Nothing else can separate us. Without this element of war and woe in our institutions, our nation would be more indissolubly bound together by mutual benefits, than any other nation is by habit and tradition. Have we, then, nothing to do with slavery? Is it the concern of the South alone? Are we bound to keep silence on it, because it nowhere touches us, because it is as foreign to us as the slavery of Turkey and Russia? Oh no. It more than touches us. We feel its grasp. We owe it to ourselves, as well as to humanity, to do what we lawfully and peacefully may to procure its abolition.

I have thus considered at length the right and fitness of discussing freely the subject of slavery. Why is it that this right is questioned? What lies at the bottom of the charge against us, of unwarrantable interference with what is not our proper concern? The real cause of the complaint, though not suspected at the South, is the insensibility which prevails there in regard to this evil. Could the slaveholder look on it from our point of view, could he see it as we do, he would no longer blame our remonstrances against it. He would himself join the cry. But here lies his unhappiness. Long habit has hardened him to slavery. Perhaps he calls it an evil, but this word on his lips means something very different from what it means on ours. Habit is as powerful over the understanding and conscience as over the will. An institution handed down from our fathers, sanctioned by laws, and under which we have grown up, be it ever so criminal, cannot shock us

as it does a stranger, and we naturally count the stranger's rebuke an insult and wrong. Here lies the vice of Mr. Clay's speech. He silently assumes the innocence of slavery. He does not dream of the need of apologizing for himself as a slave-holder. He cannot realize, that, in the view of the civilized world, this is a brand, which shows through all the brightness of his talents and fame. He approaches the subject with a tone of confidence, and, though the advocate of flagrant injustice, takes the ground of an injured man. We, who speak and write against slavery, find our vindication and our duty in the enormity of the evil. How natural that those, who have lived in fellowship with the evil from their birth, should look on us as rash, unwarrantable meddlers with what is their business alone!

I have said, that we rest the justice and obligation of our moral efforts against slavery, on the greatness of the evil. It might then be expected, that to make out our case more fully, I should enlarge on this topic, and show that slavery is not an imaginary monster, but a combination of wrongs, and crimes, and woes, not only justifying, but demanding the opposition of all good men. But I have, in a former publication, travelled this ground, and I cannot unnecessarily renew the pain which I then suffered. There is, however, one topic on which something should be said. I refer to the common apology for slavery, by which the whole South, and not a few at the North, conceal from themselves the true character of this evil, and repel as unwarrantable our efforts for its destruction. Whenever the subject is discussed, we are told, that through the lenity of the master, the slave suffers less than the labourer in most other countries. He has more comforts, we hear; he is happier. To this refuge the slaveholder always flies. My next object, therefore, and one intimately connected with the preceding, will be to examine this position.

I begin with observing, that it is honourable to our times, that such a defence as this is urged and required. It shows the progress of civilization and Christianity, that

the master holds himself bound to maintain, that his victim is happier for his bondage. An ancient Roman never thought of seeking a justification of slavery in its blessings, never took the ground of his being a benefactor to those whom he oppressed. We have here a sign of the great moral revolution which is making its way through society; and we may be assured, that when slavery can only stand on the footing of its beneficence, it is not far from its fall.

I have never been disposed to deny, that at the South slavery wore a milder aspect than in other countries; though by some this is strenuously denied. I concede the fact; and still more, I cannot doubt, that the condition of the slave continues to improve. The cry, that the slave is treated more severely on account of the abolition movement at the North, cannot be true on the whole, though particular restraints may be increased. He is and must be treated more kindly. We have here better evidence than rumour. A master was never made more severe, by having the eyes of the world turned upon him, especially when the world, as at present, is more than ever penetrated with the spirit of humanity. Slavery exists at this moment under the broad light of heaven. The sound of the lash resounds through the free States, and through all nations. The master is held responsible to his race for his power. Can this make him more severe? The defences which we hear from the South, sets us at ease on this point. The anxiety of the planter to show the northern visitor the comforts of his slaves, sets us at ease. Within a short time, more than one gentle voice of woman from the South has spoken to me of the happiness of the slave. The master feels, that he can only keep himself within the pale of civilized society, by practising kindness to a certain extent. All his defenders at the North plead his kindness. Who does not see, that, under these influences, the severities of the system must be mitigated, and that the advocates of freedom are doing immediate good to the poor creatures whose cause they espouse?

I believe, too, that not only is the general treatment of

the slaves improved, but that their religious means are increased, in consequence of the agitation at the North. We are told, that they are now denied instruction in reading. But ministers, churches, masters, are waked up, as never before, to the obligation of giving to the slaves the blessings of Christianity, and have a new anxiety to roll away the reproach of bringing up hordes of heathens within their borders. I must say, however, that whilst we must give credit to the South for increased religious attention to the slave, I expect little good from it. And I thus speak, not merely from the reports of intelligent witnesses, but from immutable moral principles. It is hard to graft good on what is essentially evil and corrupt; hard for the man who oppresses to exalt his victim. There is always a tendency to unity in the various influences which a man exerts. To enslave a human being, is to war against his religious, as truly as his social and physical nature. The African is, indeed, very susceptible, and easily puts on the show of piety. Nothing is easier than to draw forth groans or shouts from a coloured congregation. Nothing easier than to gather this people by crowds into churches. But the slave is incapable of a nobler reverence towards God than towards his master. He is equally, I fear, a slave before both. This is one of the evils of slavery, that it perverts, turns into an instrument of degradation, that highest sentiment of our nature, reverence. In truth, it is hard to comprehend, how the slave-holder can preach the grand principles of Christianity; how he can set forth God as the Universal Father, who looks on all men with an equally tender love, and watches, with an equal severity of justice, over the rights of all. Indeed, how difficult must it be for either master or slaves to get into the heart of this religion, to understand its deep purpose, when the chief element of such a community is in direct hostility to its spirit. I speak not from report, but from the general principles of human nature; and these would lead me to fear, that, in such a community, the religion of the higher classes as well as of the lowest, must be, to an unusual extent, one or another form of superstition, that is, a sub-

stitution of dogmas, ceremonies, or feelings, for the manly and enlightened piety which Jesus taught, and which makes the worship of God to consist chiefly in the imitation of his Universal Justice and Universal Love.

This is somewhat of a digression, though not exceeding the freedom of epistolary communication. I return to the subject. I acknowledge, and rejoice to acknowledge, that slavery is mitigated by kindness at the South, though, as we shall see, it necessarily includes much cruelty. I will allow to the full extent what is urged in favour of the comforts of a state of bondage, though the concession is not warranted by facts. I still say, that the apology fails of its end; that it does not touch the essential, fundamental evil of slavery, which is, the injustice it does to a human being. It is no excuse for wronging a man, that you make him as comfortable as is consistent with the wrong. A man, shutting me up in prison, would poorly atone for his violation of my rights, by feeding and clothing me to my heart's content. I claim from my oppressor, not food and clothes, but freedom. I insist that he leave to me, unrestrained, the right of using my limbs and powers for my own and others' good. A deep instinct of my soul, founded at once in my spiritual and physical nature, calls out for personal liberty. No matter that our chains are woven of silk; they are as iron, because they are chains. Let a master draw round us a line, which may not be passed without our being driven back by a whip; and for this very reason we should burn to escape. Such is the thirst for freedom, breathed by God into the human spirit. Slavery is a violence to our nature, to which nothing but abjectness can reconcile a man, and which we honour him for repelling.

It is vain to say, that the slave suffers less than other labourers. We have no right to inflict a suffering, greater or less, on an innocent fellow-creature. Injustice is injustice, be the extent of its influence ever so confined. Were one of our governments, by an act of usurpation, to abridge the free motions and the rights of the labouring class, would it be a mitigation of the wrong, that the

labourer still exceeded in privileges and means of pleasure the serfs of Russia? It is no excuse for keeping a man in the dust, that you throw him better food than he can earn by his free industry. Be just before you are generous. The lenity which quiets you in wrong doing, becomes a crime. Do not boast of your humanity to those whom you own, when it is a cruel wrong to be their owner. Some highwaymen have taken pride in the gentlemanly, courteous style in which they have eased the traveller of his purse. They have given him back a part of the spoils, that he might travel comfortably home. But they were robbers still. A criminal relation cannot be made virtuous by the mode of sustaining it. Cæsar was a clement dictator, but usurpation did not therefore cease to be a vice.

It is no excuse for taking possession of a man, that we can make him happier. We are poor judges of another's happiness. He was made to work it out for himself. Our opinion of his best interests is particularly to be distrusted, when our own interest is to be advanced by making him our tool. Especially if, to make him happy, we must drive him as a brute, subject him to the lash, it is plainly time to give up our philanthropic efforts, and to let him seek his good in his own way.

Allow that the sufferings of the slave are less than those of the free labourer. But these sufferings are wrongs, and this changes their nature. Pain as pain, is nothing compared with pain when it is a wrong. A blow, given me by accident, may fell me to the earth; but after all it is a trifle. A slight blow, inflicted in scorn or with injurious intent, is an evil, which, without aid from my principles, I could not bear. Let God's providence confine me to my room by disease, and I more than submit, for in his dispensations I see parental goodness seeking my purity and peace: but let man imprison me, without inflicting disease, and how intolerable my narrow bounds. So if the elements take away our property, we resign it without a murmur; but if man robs us of our fortune, poverty weighs on us as a mountain. Anything can be borne, but the will

and the power of the selfish, unrighteous man. There is also this difference between sufferings from God or nature, and sufferings from human injustice. The former we are almost always able to soften or remove by industry and skill, by studying the laws of nature, or by seeking aid and sympathy from men. These sufferings are intended to awaken our powers, and to strengthen social dependencies. Nature opposes us that we may resist her, and, by resistance, may grow strong. But the owner of his fellow-creatures resents the resistance as a wrong, and cuts them off from help from their kind.

It will be said, that the slave has nothing of this consciousness of his wrongs, which adds such weight to sufferings. He has no self-respect, we hear, to be wounded when he is lashed: To him, as to the ox, a blow is but a blow. And is this an apology for slavery, that it destroys all sense of wrongs, blunts the common sensibilities of human nature, makes man tame than the nobler animals under inflicted pain? It is this prostration of self-respect, and of just indignation for wrongs, which sets an additional seal on slavery as an outrage on humanity. But it is not true, that the spirit of a man is wholly killed in the slave. The moral nature never dies. He often feels a wrong in the violence which he cannot resist; he has often bitter hatred towards the cruel overseer; he ponders in secret over his oppressed lot. There are deep groans of conscious injury and revenge, which, though smothered by fear, do not less agonize the soul.

In these remarks we have seen how much the slave may suffer, though little of what is called cruelty enters into his lot. My hostility to the system does not rest primarily on the physical agonies it inflicts, but on a deeper foundation; on its flagrant injustice, and on the misery necessarily involved in a system of wrong. Slavery, however, is not be absolved from the guilt of cruelty. However tempered with kindness, it does and must bear this brand. Who that knows human nature, can question whether irresponsible power will be abused? Such power breeds the very passions which make abuse sure. Besides, it is exposed

to great temptation. Slaves are necessarily irritating. Their laziness, thievishness, lying propensities, sulkiness, the natural fruits of their condition, are sore trials to those placed over them. Slavery necessarily generates in its victims the very vices which are most fitted to fret and exasperate the owner or overseer. Under such circumstances more cruelty might be expected than exists. After all the instances of barbarity we hear from the South, the patience of the slave-holder is more to be wondered at than his severity. The relation he sustains is the last for a good man to covet. It is, of all others, most fitted to nourish the passions, against which religion calls us to watch. He who would not be "led into temptation," should cast away with dread irresponsible power over his fellow-creatures. That, under such circumstances, selfishness, the passion for dominion, avarice, anger, impatience, lust, should break out into fearful excesses, is as necessary as that the stone should fall or the fire destroy.

One instance of cruelty at the South has lately found its way into some of our papers, and that is, the employment of blood-hounds in parts of the new States, for the recovery, or if this be resisted, for the destruction of the fugitive slaves. This statement has been questioned or denied, by those who incline to favourable views of the whole subject, as an atrocity too monstrous for belief. I have not enquired into its authenticity. But that one breed of blood-hounds exists at the South, we know; a breed not armed with fangs, but with rifles, and who shoot down the fugitive when no other way is left for arresting his flight. And where lies the difference between tearing his flesh by teeth, or sending bullets through his heart, skull, or bowels. My humanity can draw no lines between these infernal modes of dispatching a fellow-creature, guilty of no offence, but that of asserting one of the primary, inalienable rights of his nature. It is bad enough to oppress a man; but, when he escapes from oppression, to pursue him with mortal weapons, to shatter his bones, to mutilate him, and thus send him from a weary life with an

agonizing, bloody death, is murder in an aggravated form. The laws which sanction the shooting of the flying slave, are to my mind attempts to legalize murder. They who uphold them do, however unconsciously, uphold murder. It is vain to say that this is an accompaniment of slavery which cannot be avoided: the accompaniment proves the character of the system. It is a fearful law of our condition, that crimes cannot stand alone. Slavery and murder go hand in hand. Having taken the first step in a system of cruelty and wrong, we can set no bounds to our career.

Still I do not charge cruelty on slavery as its worst evil. The great evil is, the contempt and violation of human rights, the injustice which treats a man as a brute, and which breaks his spirit to make him a human tool. It is the injustice, which denies him the means of improvement, which denies him scope for his powers, which dooms him to an unchangeable lot, which robs him of the primitive right of human nature, that of bettering his outward and inward state. It is the injustice, which converts his social connexions into a curse. Here, perhaps, the influence of slavery is most blighting. Our social connexions are intended by God to be among our chief means of improvement and happiness; and a system which wars with these is the most cruel outrage on our nature. Other men's chief relations are to wife and children, to brother and sister, to beings endeared by nature, and who awaken the heart to tenderness and faithful love. The slave's chief relation is to his owner, to the man who wrongs him. This it is, which above all things determines his lot, and this infuses poison into all his other social connexions. This destroys the foundation of domestic happiness by sullyng female purity, by extinguishing in woman the sense of honour. This violates the sanctity of the marriage bond. This tears the wife from the husband, or condemns her to insult, perhaps laceration in his sight. This takes from the parent his children. His children belong to another, and are disposed of for another's gain. Thus God's great pro-

visions for softening, refining, elevating human nature are thwarted. Thus social ties are liable to be turned into bitterness and wrong.

An ecclesiastical document, which appeared not long ago in some of our papers, is a strong illustration of the influence of slavery on the relations of domestic life. It confirms what we have often heard, that the slaves are commanded to marry or live together, for the purpose of keeping up the stock of the estate. It shows us, too, that when slaves are sold at a distance from their original homes, they are commanded to give up the wives or husbands whom they have left, to serve the estate by forming new connexions. Against this tyranny one would think, that the slave would find some protection in his religious teachers. One would think, that the Christian minister would interpose, to save the coloured member of the church from being forced to renounce the wife from whom he had been torn; that he would struggle to rescue him from an adulterous union, against which his affections as well as sense of duty may revolt. But, according to this document, an association of ministers decreed, that the slave, sold at a distance from his home, was to be regarded as dead to his former wife; that he was not to be treated in this concern as a free agent; that he was not to be countenanced by the church in resisting his master's will. The document is given below.* What a comment on Southern

* The following extract is made from the *Antislavery Record* of Feb. 9, 1836:

"The following query was, not long since, presented to the Savannah River Baptist Association of Ministers:—'Whether, in case of involuntary separation, of such a character as to preclude all prospect of future intercourse, the parties ought to be allowed to marry again?' This query was put in regard to husband and wife separated by sale; an every day result of the great internal slave-trade. They answered—

" 'That such separation, among persons situated as our slaves are, is civilly a separation by death; and they believe, that in the sight of God it would be so viewed. To forbid second marriages in such case, would be to expose the parties, not only to stronger hardships and strong temptations, but to church censure for acting in obedience to their masters, who cannot be expected to acquiesce in a regulation at variance with justice to the slaves, and to the spirit of that command which regulates marriage among Christians. The slaves are not free agents; and a dissolution by death is not more entirely without their consent and beyond their control, than by such separation.' "

institutions! It shows how religion is made their tool, how Christianity is used to do violence to the most sacred feelings and ties, that the breed of slaves may be kept up. It shows us, that this iniquitous system pollutes by its touch, the divinest, the holiest provision of God for human happiness and virtue.

There is a short method of palliating these and all the enormities of slavery, which is more and more resorted to at the South. The slave-holder looks abroad on the world, and, finding in other countries a great amount of hardship, crime, prostitution, penury, woe, he proceeds to say, that these are the lot of humanity, and that they are not borne more extensively or painfully in slave countries than in others, perhaps even less. Why, then, is slavery so great an evil? Without stopping to examine these alleged facts, I see an important difference in the cases brought into comparison. In other civilized countries, the evils charged on them are seen and deplored, and it is acknowledged that earnest efforts should be made for their removal. Religion and philanthropy, though still half slumbering, are waking up to a sense of great responsibility, and to new struggles with the giant evils of society. It is acknowledged, that, as far as institutions entail on the great labouring class, poverty, vice, prostitution, domestic infidelity, and brutal debasement of intellect and heart, they ought to be changed. Nowhere but in slave countries are the civil power, the sword, the laws, the wealth, the religion of a community deliberately pledged to the support of a system, which is known and acknowledged to deprive one half of the people of property and civil rights, known to doom them to perpetual ignorance and licentiousness, known to rob the individual of the means of progress, and to poison the sources of domestic well-being. To slave countries belongs the presumptuousness of *ordaining* the perpetual debasement of half the community, on no better ground, than that from the laws of nature a large amount of evil must adhere to the social state. What! Does Providence intend no progress in human affairs? Does Christianity encourage and enjoin no efforts

for a happier condition of humanity? Is man to take his rules of conduct towards his fellow-creatures from the corruptions which barbarous times have transmitted to the present? May man, sheltering himself under Divine Providence, perpetuate evils, which God, through the conscience and by his Son, commands us, to the extent of our power, to diminish and to expel from the social state?

To return to the kindness, which is said to be practised at the South towards the slaves. I wish not to disparage it. Let us open our eyes to whatever is beautiful or promising in human life. I could laud this kindness as heartily as any man, did I not find it used, both here and at the South, as a buttress to the tottering cause of slavery. I am bound, therefore, to enquire into its real value, to give it its due, but nothing more than its due. One obvious remark is, that kindness without justice is of little moral worth. It is a feeling rather than a principle. Principle enjoins justice, and will not offer favours as an atonement for wrongs.—Again, the kindness at the South, of which we hear, finds its occasion in a dependence and helplessness, which the kind agent has himself created. Is there much merit in taking care of those whom we have stripped of all property, of self-help, of all the means of taking care of themselves?—There is another subtraction from kindness to the slave, inasmuch as it is a matter of interest. The human machine cannot work without food, raiment, and health; and, in times like the present, when slave-labour is more than usually profitable, there cannot be a better investment of money, than in comforts which keep the slave in a working state. A more important consideration is, that the kindness to the slave is not of the right stamp. It wants a moral character. The master is kind to them because they are *his own*, not because they are fellow-creatures. The true, grand foundation of love is wanting. How kind are men to dogs and horses, which they have long owned! They feed them, caress them, admit them to their familiarity. But the sort of kindness which is shown to the brute, becomes a wrong and insult when extended to the man. He must be loved and

respected as a man. This is his due; and had he the feelings of a man, nothing less would content him. The slave is treated kindly, because he is a slave, and has the spirit of a slave. Once let the spirit of a man wake in him, once let him know his rights, and show his knowledge in words, looks, and bearing, and immediately he falls under suspicion and dislike, and a severity, designed to break him down, is substituted for kindness. He is less liked, in proportion as he acts from a principle in his own breast, and not from his master's will. And what is the worth of such kindness? The slave, were he not so degraded, would regard it as a cruel mockery.—Again, I cannot but think, that a good deal of the kindness at the South has for its object to quiet the self-reproach, which, at this age, can hardly but exist in a latent state in the slave-holder's breast. Men must, in some way or other, strike up a peace with their own consciences. He who holds his fellow-creatures in bondage, must reconcile himself to himself; and nowhere is the task so difficult as in a free country, where the master claims liberty as an inalienable right, and clings to it more than to life. In such a country, he can only escape the consciousness of wrong, by flattering himself that he is the benefactor of the slave. But kindness, when thus made an opiate to conscience, is more a crime than a virtue.—As a conclusion to this head, I am willing and happy to acknowledge, that the kindness of the South to the slave is to be ascribed, in part, to the religious and moral improvements of the times. We live under brighter lights than former generations; and these influences penetrate into all the relations of life. But the lights which induce the master to use his power more mercifully, do not finish their mission by this teaching. They command him to renounce his power altogether: they convict him of usurpation. The principles which persuade him to be a lenient owner, if carried out, forbid him to be an owner at all. That state of civilization, which dictates mercy towards the slave, makes slavery a greater crime. Oppression is to be measured, not by its weight, but by the light under which

it is practised. To rob men of liberty, in an age which recognises human rights, and God's equal love to all his human creatures, is a very different thing from enslaving men in ages of darkness and despotism. A slight cruelty now is a more heinous crime than an atrocity in barbarous times. Must we not feel, then, that slavery among us, however mild, has a guilt in the sight of God unknown before? Its very kindnesses, extorted from it by the clear lights of religion and freedom, become testimonies to its guilt. This may seem severe. But God knows, that my desire is not to give pain, but to set forth what seems to me great moral truth, for the benefit of my fellow-creatures.

I have thus attempted to show, that there is nothing in the mitigating circumstances of slavery to diminish the reprobation with which it is regarded by the civilized world, and nothing to justify the charge brought against its opposers of unwarrantable interference. Having finished this part of my task, I shall now pass to those portions of Mr. Clay's speech, in which he meets the arguments against slavery by attempting to show that emancipation is impossible. The arguments on which he rests are chiefly these, the amount of property which would be sacrificed by emancipation; next, the amalgamation of the races; and, lastly, the civil wars, ending in extermination of one or the other race, which would follow the measure. I shall consider these in their order.

Mr. Clay maintains, that "the total value of the slave property in the United States is twelve hundred millions of dollars," and considers this "immense amount" as putting the freedom of the slave out of the question. Who can be expected to make such a sacrifice? The accuracy of this valuation of the slaves I have nothing to do with. I admit it without dispute. But the impression made on my mind by the vastness of the sum, is directly the reverse of the effect on Mr. Clay. Regarding slavery as throughout a wrong, I see, in the immenseness of the value of the slaves, the enormous amount of the robbery committed on them. I see "twelve hundred millions of dollars" seized,

extorted by unrighteous force. I know not on the face of the earth a system of such enormous spoliation. I know nowhere injustice on such a giant scale. And yet, the vast amount of this wrong is, in the view of many, a reason for its continuance! If I strip my neighbour of a few dollars, I ought to restore them; but if I have spoiled him of his all, and grown rich on the spoils, I must not be expected to make restitution! Justice, when it will cost much, loses its binding power! What makes the present case more startling is, that this vast amount of property consists not of the goods of injured men, but of the men themselves. Here are human nerves, living men, worth, at the market price, "twelve hundred millions of dollars." That this enormous wrong should be perpetuated in the bosom of a Christian and civilized community, is a sad comment on our times. Sad and strange, that a distinguished man, in the face of a great people and of the world, should talk with entire indifference of fellow-creatures, held and labelled as property, to this "immense amount."

But this property, we are told, is not to be questioned, on account of its long duration. "Two hundred years of legislation have sanctioned and *sanctified* negro slaves as property." Nothing but respect for the speaker could repress criticism on this unhappy phraseology. We will trust it escaped him without thought. But to confine ourselves to the argument from duration; how obvious the reply! Is injustice changed into justice by the practice of ages? Is my victim made a righteous prey, because I have bowed him to the earth till he cannot rise? For more than two hundred years heretics were burned, and not by mobs, not by Lynch law, but by the decrees of councils, at the instigation of theologians and with the sanction of the laws and religions of nations; and was this a reason for keeping up the fires, that they had burned two hundred years? In the Eastern world, successive despots, not for two hundred years, but for twice two thousand, have claimed the right of life and death over millions, and with no law but their own will, have be-

headed, bowstrung, starved, tortured unhappy men without number, who have incurred their wrath; and does the lapse of so many centuries sanctify murder and ferocious power?

But the great argument remains. It is said that this property must not be questioned, because it is established by law. "That is property, which the law declares *to be property*."* Thus, human law is made supreme, decisive, in a grave question of morals. Thus, the idea of an eternal, immutable justice is set at nought. Thus, the great rule of human life is made to be the ordinance of interested men. But there is a higher tribunal, a throne of equal justice, immovable by the conspiracy of all human legislatures. "That is property, which the law declares *to be property*." Then the laws have only to declare you, or me, or Mr. Clay, to be property, and we become chattels and are bound to bear the yoke! Does not every man's moral nature repel this doctrine too intuitively to leave time or need for argument?

I always hear with pain the doctrine, too common among lawyers, that property is the creature of the law: as if it had no natural foundation; as if it were not a natural right; as if it did not precede all laws; and were not their ground, instead of being their effect. Government is ordained, not to create, so much as to protect and regulate property; and the chief strength of government lies in the sanction, which the moral sense, the natural idea of right, gives to honestly earned possessions. The notion which I am combating is essentially revolutionary and destructive. We hear much of Radicalism, of Agrarianism, at the present day. But of all Radicals, the most dangerous, perhaps, is he who makes property the "creature of law;" because, what law creates it can destroy. If we of this Commonwealth have no right in our persons, houses, ships, farms, but what a vote of the legislature or the majority confers, then a vote of the same masses may strip us of them all, and transfer them to others; and the right will work with the law. According to this doctrine, I see not why the majority, who are always comparatively

* The italics are by Mr. Clay.

poor, may not step into the mansions and estates of the rich. I see not why the law cannot make some idle neighbour the rightful owner of your fortune or mine. What better support can Radicalism ask than this?

It may be objected, that legislation does, in fact, touch and take a part of the citizens' property; and if a part, why not the whole. I reply, that the general end for which legislation touches property is, to make it more secure. It levies taxes for the execution of laws, under which all property is safe. I reply again, that a righteous legislature, in touching property, still shows it respect, by equalizing, as far as possible, the burdens it imposes, and by making compensation, when it can, for what it alienates or destroys. I am aware, indeed, that legislation may, in certain circumstances, make important changes in the tenure of property; and the reason is, that property is not the only human right, and consequently that it may sometimes come into collision with other rights, in which case, all are to be reconciled according to the highest moral law. Thus, a community threatened with destruction, may appropriate to its use what it cannot restore, or it may set bounds to the individual accumulation of wealth, where this shall plainly menace ruin to its institutions. The right of gaining property, being universal, does itself require, that the individual shall not be suffered so to accumulate, as to take from multitudes the chance of earning means of support, or as to create a power dangerous to the right of any class of citizens. According to these principles, entails may be forbidden, and laws, relating to testaments may be so framed as to break up overgrown estates. But in all these cases, legislation, in touching property, treats it with reverence, and acknowledges its foundation in immutable justice. There are, then, principles of property, which no laws can move. Man cannot make and unmake it at will. As he is physically unable to turn the sun and air into private possessions, so he is morally incompetent to turn his fellow-creatures into chattels. Both cases are out of the province of law. Even Mr. Clay, in urging the wrong which would

be done to slave-holders, should the law strip them of their slaves, acknowledges that law is not the supreme rule of right; for, if it were, with what face could they complain of being wrongfully dispossessed?

Mr. Clay, having thus summarily settled the validity of the slave-holder's claim, goes on to affirm, that the opposite doctrine, the doctrine that man cannot be rightfully seized and held as property, is "a visionary dogma," "the wild speculation of theorists and innovators." Does not Mr. Clay know, that the English nation, from its highest to its lowest ranks, with scarce an exception, pronounces the pretended right of property in men an aggravated wrong? Does he not know, that this same doctrine prevades the continent? that, indeed, it is the acknowledged sentiment of Europe, with the exception of Russia and Turkey? Does he not know, that it is the faith of the vast majority of the free States? In truth, I know none, who, in their hearts, believe that man may rightfully be made property, with the exception of some technical lawyers, a body too much inclined to exalt precedents above principles, to make the statute book the standard of truth and duty, and practically to recognise no higher law than that of a majority or a king.

I maintain, then, that the slave-holder has no defence in law, or in the opinion of the civilized world, for continuing to hold slaves. He is bound to free them, and to do it the sooner on account of their great value. He has held this vast amount of others' property long enough, and the rightful owners have ground for urgency in proportion to the extent and duration of their wrongs.

"But must the slave-holder make himself poor?" says many a man at the North, as well as at the South. I answer, by asking those who put the question, what they would deem to be their own duty, should they find themselves in possession of a large amount belonging to their neighbour? Would they go on to hold it, because honesty would make them poor? Then they are criminal, and deserve to join their partners in the State-prison. He who is just, only as long as justice will secure him a warm home and the comforts of life, should be called by his right

name, an unprincipled man. I cannot doubt, that multitudes at the South, if thoroughly convinced of holding what is not their own, would renounce it in obedience to God and justice.

But a more important objection remains. Men of honour and principle, who recognise immediately the obligation of individuals to restore what is not their own, will tell me, that, in the present case, not merely individuals, but states, bodies politic, with their order and essential interests, are concerned; that when a particular kind of property becomes enwoven with all the possessions, transactions, and habits of a community, sudden changes in it may induce universal bankruptcy, and threaten society with dissolution; and they may ask whether I am prepared, in such cases, to insist punctiliously on giving every man his due? I answer, that this reasoning applies only to what may be lawfully held as property, to material things, such as houses and lands. It is acknowledged, that a man's right to these is controlled and superseded in extreme cases, when the assertion of it would bring great evils on the state. This is a fundamental restriction on the right of property. But in allowing this, I do not allow that human beings, God's rational and moral creatures, who cannot be held as property without unutterable wrong, may still be retained as chattels, from apprehension of evils, which restoration of their rights may bring on the state. No fear of consequences can authorize us to violate an eternal, immutable law of justice. I deny, however, that the dreaded consequences of doing right, in the case before us, can occur. I deny, that Providence has ordained, or can ever ordain, remediless injustice, as an essential condition of social security. On what ground is this wide-spreading ruin to be feared, from destroying property in slaves? Is emancipation an untried thing? Has it not been carried through again and again, in countries where social order was less confirmed, and ideas of property were looser, than among ourselves? In the West Indies, has not the revolution been suddenly accomplished without the least shock to property? Have we not reason to believe, that the price of real estate has

risen under the change? The slave is a working machine; and is his power to work paralysed by liberty? Does not the master, possessing as he does the soil and capital, possess unfailing means of obtaining from the coloured man, whether bond or free, the labour required for the cultivation of the soil? And with this grand original source of all wealth untouched, is not society secured against universal insolvency? How apt are men to raise phantoms to terrify themselves from an unwelcome duty!

Mr. Clay insists, that the slave-holder has a right to full compensation from those who call on him to surrender his slaves. I utterly deny such a right in a man who surrenders what is not his own. I cheerfully acknowledge, however, that whilst, in strict justice, the slave-holder has no claim to indemnity, he has a title to sympathy and equitable consideration. A man, who, by conscientious and honourable relinquishment of what he discovers to be another's, makes himself comparatively poor, deserves respect and liberal aid. There are few at the North, who would not joyfully acquiesce in the plan of that distinguished statesman, Rufus King, for large appropriations of the public land to the indemnifying of sufferers under an act of universal abolition.

It is believed, however, that compensation, even on the most liberal scale, would not be a great amount; for the planters in general would suffer little, if at all, from emancipation. This change would make them richer, rather than poorer. One would think, indeed, from the common language on the subject, that the negroes were to be annihilated by being set free; that the whole labour of the South was to be destroyed by a single blow. But the coloured man, when freed, will not vanish from the soil. He will stand there with the same muscles as before, only strung anew by liberty; with the same limbs to toil, and with stronger motives to toil than before. He will receive wages, instead of a fixed allowance; and wages are found in many parts of the West Indies, to get from him nearly twice the labour which he performed during bondage. He will work from hope, not fear; will work for himself, not for others; and, unless all the principles of human nature

are reversed under a black skin, he will work better than before. For what mighty loss then does the slave-holder need compensation? We believe that agriculture will revive, worn out soils be renewed, and the whole country assume a brighter aspect under free labour. The slaveholder, in relinquishing what is another's, will add a new value to what is unquestionably his own.

The next objection to Emancipation is, that it will produce an amalgamation of the white and coloured races. This objection is a strange one from a resident at the South. Can any impartial man fear, that amalgamation will in any event go on more rapidly than at the present moment? Slavery tends directly to intermingle the races. It robs the coloured female of protection against licentiousness. Still worse, it robs her of self-respect. It dooms her class to prostitution. Nothing but freedom can give her the feelings of a woman, and can shield her from brutal lust. Slavery does something worse than sell off her children. It makes her a stranger to the delicacy of her sex. Undoubtedly a smile will be provoked by expressions of concern for the delicacy of a coloured woman. But is this a conventional, arbitrary accomplishment, appropriate only to a white skin? Is it not the fit, natural, beautiful adorning, which God designed for every woman; and does not a curse belong to an institution which blights it, not accidentally, but by a necessary fixed operation? It is the relation of property in human beings which generates the impure connexions of the South, and which prevents the natural repugnance, growing out of difference of colour, from exerting its power. As far as marriage is concerned, there seems to be a natural repugnance between the races; and in saying this, no unfeeling contempt is expressed towards either race. Marriage is an affair of taste. We do not marry the old; yet how profoundly we respect them. How few women would a man of refinement consent to marry; yet he honours the sex. The barrier of colour, as far as this particular connexion is concerned, implies no degradation of the African race. There seems, as I said, a repugnance in nature;

but if not natural, the prejudice is as strong as an innate feeling; and how much it may be relied on to prevent connexions, we may judge from the whole experience of the North. There is another security against this union in our country. I refer to the mark which has been set on the coloured race by their past slavery; a mark which generations will not efface, and in which the whites will have no desire to participate. Even were the slaves of the South of our own colour, and were slavery to fix on them and on their children some badge or memorial, such as the impress of a lash on the forehead, or of a chain on the cheek, how few among the class of free descent would be anxious to ally themselves with this separated portion of the race. The spirit of caste, which almost seems the strongest in human nature, will certainly postpone amalgamation long enough, to give the world opportunity to understand and manage the subject much better than ourselves. To continue a system of wrong from dread of such evils, only shows the ingenuity of power in defending itself. The fable of the wolf and the lamb drinking at the same stream, comes spontaneously to our thoughts. But allowing what I have contested, allowing that amalgamation is to be anticipated, then, I maintain, we have no right to resist it. Then it is not unnatural. If the tendencies to it are so strong that they can only be resisted by a systematic degradation of a large portion of our fellow-creatures, then God intended it to take place, and resistance to it is opposition to his will. What a strange reason for oppressing a race of fellow-beings, that, if we restore them to their rights, we shall marry them!

I proceed to the last objection to Emancipation. We are told that it will stir up the two races to a war, which nothing but the slavery or extermination of one or the other will end. We have often heard of the "fears of the brave;" so that we ought not, perhaps, to wonder at the alarm here expressed. And yet we are somewhat surprised that "the chivalry of the South" should see in the coloured man a formidable foe, and should be willing to put forth their fears as a defence of their injustice. Superior as the slave-holders are in number, holding all

the property and civil power, distinguished by education, by skill in arms, and by singular daring, and backed by the whole power of the free States, can they seriously dread collisions? All our fear here is, that the coloured man, though freed, will remain a slave, will be crushed by the lordly spirit, the high bearing of the white race; that he will not for a long time rise to a just self-respect. We fear, that in a country where the law of honour and Lynch law are rife, he cannot enjoy that equality before the civil laws, to which freedom will give him a nominal claim. We fear, that among a people who take the protection of their persons and character into their own hands, and shoot down the man who offers an insult, the poor coloured race, whose assertion of rights will easily be construed into insolence, will be very slow to insist on their due. That they should gain the ascendancy, without some miraculous combination of circumstances, is impossible. Were they a fierce, savage, indomitable race, they might be looked on with apprehension; but they are the most inoffensive people on earth; and their mildness has undoubtedly perpetuated their chains. With emancipation their present rapid increase will be checked, for the motives to breed them will cease. With liberty of motion, the desire of change of place will spring up; they will naturally be more or less dispersed; the danger of concentration on a few spots will diminish; and when we think of the vast extent of our country, we may expect them to become a sprinkling through our population, incapable, even if desirous, of disturbing the public peace. Especially the discontented, bold, and adventurous, the very spirits from which turbulence might be feared, will be attracted by hope and novelty, as well as driven by inward restlessness, to new scenes. In truth, can we conceive of a country which has so little to dread from emancipation as this, reaching as it does from ocean to ocean, and destined to receive increasing accessions to its numbers from the old world. It is also worthy of note, that the characteristics of the coloured race are particularly fitted to keep them harmless. I refer to their passion for imitation of their superiors, and to their

love of show and fashion, which tend to attach them more to the white race than to their own, and to break them up into different ranks or castes among themselves.

The groundlessness of fears from Emancipation is becoming more apparent from the experiment of the West Indies. I do not speak of this as decided; but its first fruits surpass all expectation. The slaves in those islands were to their masters in the proportion of eight or ten to one, and they are shut up in narrow islands, which prevent dispersion; and yet the gift of freedom has not provoked an act of violence. Their new liberty has been followed by a degree of order unknown before; and, what makes this peaceful transition more striking is, that emancipation took place under every possible disadvantage. It was not the free gift of the master, not an act of justice and kindness, not accompanied with appeals to the gratitude and better nature of the slave. It was conferred by a distant benefactor; it was forced on the planter: it was submitted to with predictions of its ruinous results. The generous hope, which so often creates the good it pants for, was wanting. In Jamaica, it would seem, that the furious opposition of the planting interest to the measure, broke out, in some instances, into a desire of its defeat. Yet under all these disadvantages, which can never occur here, because emancipation here must be a free gift, the prospects of a successful issue are brighter than had dawned on any but the most ardent spirits. The failure of such an experiment would not have discouraged me. What ought not to be hoped from its success?

Mr. Clay seems particularly to dread immediate emancipation. But this, in the common acceptation of the words, is not the only way of giving freedom. Let the wisdom of the South engage in this cause heartily, and in good faith, and it is reasonable to expect, that means of a safe transition to freedom, not dreamed of now, would be devised. This work we have no desire to take out of the master's hands, nor would we thrust on him our plans for adoption. I indeed think, that emancipation, in one sense of the phrase, should be immediate; that is, the right of property in a human being should be immediately dis-

claimed. But though private ownership should cease, the State would be authorized and bound to provide for its own safety. The legislature may place the coloured race under guardianship, may impose such restraints as the public order shall require, and may postpone the full enjoyment of personal liberty even to the next generation. There was a time when these safeguards seemed to me needful. Happily the West Indies are teaching, and I trust will continue to teach, that immediate emancipation, in the full sense of the words, is safer than a gradual loosening of the chain.

Let me close this head with one remark. Allow what is not true; allow emancipation to be dangerous. Will it be safer hereafter than at the present moment? Will it be safer when the slaves shall have doubled, trebled, or still more increased? And must it not at length come? Can any man, who considers the chances of war, and the direction which opinion is taking in the civilized world, believe that slavery is to be perpetual? Is it wise to wink out of sight a continually increasing peril? At this moment, what possible danger is to be feared from emancipation in the northern slave States? Does not every Kentuckian *know*, that slavery can be ended now, without the slightest hazard to social order? Does not the whole danger, as to that State, lie in delay? How then can danger be an excuse for refusing emancipation?

Having thus viewed the common objections to Emancipation, I pass to one more topic, which is referred to in Mr. Clay's speech, and which is the burden of many passionate appeals from the South. I have in view the objections, which are made to the agitation of the question at the North. These are chiefly two, that such discussion may excite insurrection among the slaves; and that it threatens to dissolve the Union.

In regard to the first, the danger of insurrection, I have shown how I view it by continuing to write on the subject of slavery. Could I discover even a slight ground for apprehending such a result, I would not write. Nothing would tempt me to take the hazard of stirring up a servile

war. Bad as slavery is, massacre is far worse. In the present case, words of truth and good will are the only weapons for a Christian to fight with. A mysterious and adorable Providence permits and controls massacre, war, and the rage of savage men, for the subversion of corrupt institutions, just as it purifies the tainted atmosphere by storms and lightnings. But man is not trusted with these awful powers ; and let not philanthropy be disheartened, because not permitted to reform the world by the sudden processes of violence and bloodshed. Moral influences are the surest and most enduring ; and good men part with their strength in resorting to other means.

I have known too much of slavery, of the spirit of its victims, of the restraints under which they live, and of the master's power, to dread the stirring up of insurrections. On this point, persons who have not visited slave countries fall into great errors. Not long ago a speech was made in Boston, in which the slaves were compared to wild beasts, thirsting for blood ; and the good people were told, that the master locks his doors at night, not knowing but that in the morning he shall find the throats of wife and children cut from ear to ear ; and there were found among us some who, in the simplicity of their hearts, believed the tale. One would have thought, that in hearing the fearful story, they would have asked themselves, how it happens that our Southern brethren give five hundred or a thousand dollars for one of these beasts of prey ; how it is, that they are anxious to fill their houses and plantations, and surround their wives and children, with these assassins. Human nature, if this account be true, is a different thing at the South from what it is at the North. Here we should go mad, and should lose life as well as reason, if the murderous blade were glaring before our eyes night and day ; and still more, we should be most grateful to our neighbours, who should be anxious to free us from the curse, instead of rejecting their "meddling interference" with threats and execrations. But among the hearers of the speech referred to, there seemed not a few to whom these difficulties did not recur. They even forgot to enquire, how the fearful account was to be

reconciled with the assurances from the South of the happiness of the slave and the blessings of the institution; and, in their sympathy with the South, they frowned fiercely enough on such of us as, by our writings, are stirring up the bloody coloured race to murder. To tranquillize these compassionate people, I will tell them, that the picture which terrified them was a work of fancy. There is no such terror in slave-holding countries. In my long residences among slaves, I have used fewer precautions at night than in this good city. I have slept in one place with open doors, and in another have given to a slave the key to lock the house at the hour of retiring and to re-open it in the morning, when I have been the sole tenant of the dwelling. Undoubtedly the slave-holder wears arms, just as we bolt our doors and appoint patrols of watchmen in the streets; but in both cases, these and other means of defence bring such security, that sleep is undisturbed by fear. The slaves, broken from birth to submission, brought up in ignorance, confined to the plantation, having no means of external concert, wanting mutual confidence, because wanting principle, and separated by the distinction of house servants and field labourers, cower before their instructed, armed, united, organized masters, and feel resistance to be vain. Add to this, the strong attachment by which some on almost every estate are bound to their owners, stronger than what they bear to their own race; and we shall see, that the danger of a servile war is not great enough to embitter life or deserve much sympathy.

Rome had servile wars; but her slaves had been free-men. Among them were fierce barbarians, whose native wildernesses had infused an indomitable love of liberty; and there were civilized men, who groaned in spirit and gnashed their teeth at the degrading, intolerable yoke which was crushing them. But in this country there are no materials for servile war, at least in times of peace. In war, indeed, whether civil or foreign, an army marching with "Emancipation" on its banner might stir up the palsied spirit of the oppressed to terrible retribution for their wrongs. But very little is to be feared in ordinary

times. Were the slave more dangerous, I should feel less for his yoke. Were a greater portion of the spirit of a man left him, I should not think him so wronged. But what is to be feared from a man, who stands by and sees wife and child lacerated without cause, and is driven by no impulse to interpose for their defence. The strongest sensibilities of nature cannot sting him, to do for his child what the hen does for her chicken, or the trembling hare for her young.

The slave, as far as I have known him, is not a being to be feared. The iron has eaten into his soul, and this is worse than eating into the flesh. The tidings that there are people here who would set him free, will do little harm. He withstands a far greater temptation than this; I mean, the presence of the free negro. One would think, that the sight of his own race enjoying liberty, would, if anything, stir him up to the assertion of his rights; but it fails. Liberty is a word, not indeed to be heard without awakening desire; but it rouses no resistance. The colonizationist holds out to the slaves an elysium, where they are to be free, and rich, and happy, and a great people; thus teaching them, that there is nothing in their nature which forbids them the enjoyment of all human rights; and the master, so far from dreading the doctrines of this society, will become its president. No. Slavery has done its work; has broken the spirit. So little is the slave inclined to violence, that it is affirmed, and I presume truly, that there are fewer murders by their hands, than by an equal number of white men at the North. We hear, indeed, of atrocious deeds, assassinations, bloody combats at the South. But these are the deeds of white men. Pistols and Bowie knives are not worn by the coloured race. Slavery produces horrible, multiplied murders at the South, not by infusing rage, revenge into the man who bears the yoke, but by nursing proud, unforgiving, blood-thirsty propensities in the master.

Undoubtedly there are exposures to massacre in slave countries, as there are to mobs, partial insurrections in all countries. But outbreaks at the South will be found,

perhaps always, to have their cause in local circumstances, not in influences from abroad. I do not say, there is no danger in slavery. Systems founded in wrong want stability, and are every day growing more and more insecure, with the progress of intelligence and moral sentiment in the world. Unexpected explosions may take place at the South. Secret causes may be at work on the spirit of the slave. Foreign invasion would be a death-blow to the system. I mean only to say, that there is no danger from the discussion of slavery at the North, or only that indirect distant danger, which we are always encountering, and which no man thinks of flying from, in human affairs. The stormiest day of abolitionism has passed, and yet not a symptom of insurrection has appeared at the South. It is morally impossible, that there should be danger in the calmer days which are to follow.

I now proceed to the second objection to the agitation of slavery at the North. We are told that the Union will be thus endangered. "Danger to the Union" is so old a cry, that it ceases to startle you or myself; and yet so much sensitiveness to it remains, that the topic ought not to be lightly dismissed. And I begin with saying, that were the Union as weak as these clamours suppose, were it capable of being dissolved by any of the hundred causes, which are said to threaten it, then it would not be worth the keeping. The bonds which hold a nation together, if not exceedingly strong, are of no use. They will snap in the hour of need. But our Union is not so weak as our alarmists imagine: it has stood many storms, and will stand many more. It is not, as many think, a creature of a day. Its foundations were laid at the first settlement of these States, and their whole history was silently preparing them to become one great people. There is not a community on earth which has so distinct a conviction of the blessings of national union, and of the evils of separation, as this country; and in the present age of the world, such a conviction may avail almost or quite as much as the traditional prejudices and habits of other nations. Then our Union does not rest only on the clear perception of the good it confers. It rests on sentiment

as well as interest, and on a higher sentiment than binds any other people. We are charged, I know, with being given to boasting; but this reproach must not deter me from speaking of the deep foundation of our Union in the claims of our country on our love and reverence. No other people can look back to such founders as we. No other people has done as much in an equal time for civilization and freedom. Two hundred years have hardly passed over us, and we have redeemed from savage wildness a realm, compared with which European kingdoms are dwarfed into provinces; and, through every period of our history, we have been pressing forwards to an equality of rights and a freedom of institutions, nowhere else known in past or present times. The deliberate construction of a civil polity, in which the idea of liberty is realised to a degree not dreamed of in other countries, is one of the grandest achievements of history. Other governments, the creatures of chance, and obstructed by abuses of barbarous times, bear no such testimony to the energy and elevation of the public mind. Through this clear, bright, practical developement of the principle of liberty, these United States, an infant country, growing up in a distant wilderness, have moved and quickened the civilized world. This country has been called by Providence to a two-fold work, to spread civilization over a new continent, and to give a new impulse to the cause of human rights and freedom. A higher destiny has been granted to no people; and with all our imperfections (exceedingly great I acknowledge), we have accomplished our task with a force of thought and will unsurpassed in human history. Add to this, that we have produced what no other country can boast of, a spotless revolutionary leader, a chief, who, in a season of storm and civil strife, amidst unbounded popularity, amidst the temptations of severe hardship and of brilliant success, never, in a single instance, grasped at power, forgot his duty to his country, or wavered in his loyalty to freedom. In one form of greatness, we feel ourselves unrivalled. The annals of no people furnish a patriot and friend of liberty, so pure, so disinterested, as

Washington. That a people having such a history, should be bound by sentiment to the national union, is a necessary result of the laws of human nature ; and accordingly, the people, as far as I know them, are on this point of one heart and one mind.

But, besides this generous sentiment, we have characteristic feelings, as a people, which bind us together. One of our national passions is pride in a vast extent of territory. From the circumstance of our history and location, we are accustomed to think and talk of immense regions, and to scour remote tracts of sea and land ; and we should experience a sense of confinement in the boundaries which satisfy other states. An American has a passion for belonging to a great country. A witty foreigner observed of the city of Washington, that it had one merit if no other ; it was a city of "magnificent distances." For this kind of magnificence our people have a decided taste. We look with something like scorn on the kingdoms of the old world ; and our mother country seems to us but a speck on the ocean. We travel a distance equal to the whole length of Great Britain in two days or less, and feel as if we had but begun our journey. Our great men desire to connect their names with this vast country ; and humble individuals, whether wisely or not, derive from it a feeling of importance. The poor man, in voting, feels that he is exercising, in part, the sovereignty of an immense realm. There is more of the imagination, than of the heart, in the sentiment now unfolded, but it is real, and it is no frail bond of national union.

Another cause of Union may appear to foreigners less serious than it really is. We hold together, because we know not where to break off. Neighbouring States are too much allied in feelings and interests and domestic bonds for separation, and no State is willing to occupy the position of a frontier.

Our Union is every day gaining strength by the increased facilities of intercourse, which place distant parts of the country side by side, and are interweaving almost as closely the interests and affections of remote States as of those which border on each other. The subtile steam,

made up of mutually repelling particles, and melting in a moment into air, has become to this country a cord stronger than adamant. Providence seems to intend to give us the physical means of binding together a wider region, than was ever before blessed with one beneficent sway.

It also deserves attention that the cause, which has hitherto chiefly disturbed our Union, is diminishing, if it has not passed away. I refer to the disposition of the national legislature to interfere with local interests, or to extend itself beyond the bounds of strict necessity; thus awakening the jealousy of different sections, and giving them the notion of separate interests. This disposition is yielding, not only to the resistance of different States, but to an impossibility of its exercise founded on the nature of free institutions. Under these, government is a slowly moving machine. Its wheels seem to be clogged more and more. Diversities of interests, collisions of passion, party-spirit, and endless varieties of opinion, throw almost insuperable obstacles in the way of legislation. Congress, after a long session, separates, having hardly passed laws enough to keep the government in operation. All free States, at home and abroad, feel this difficulty; and, evil as it seems, it has no small advantages. It abates that worse nuisance, excess of legislation. By this cause, Congress is compelled to keep itself within its bounds; for in these it finds more work than it can do. The government must be in reality, what it is in name General, and must be as simple as consists with public safety; and, thus qualified, why may it not hold together a mighty realm.

Foreigners expect disunion from the extent of our territory, but in this we see safety as well as danger; for it not only flatters, as we have seen, the national pride; but multiplies the bonds of mutual interest, renders free exchange of productions and friendly intercourse vastly more profitable, and, at the same time, checks that despotic power of party leaders, those simultaneous excitements, those passionate movements, that concentration of

energy, which can lead to no good ; but from which much mischief might result, were it not for the avowed expression of our national pride.

From these remarks, it will be seen that I partake little of the nervous sensitiveness of a portion of the people, on the subject of the Union. Undoubtedly, it is exposed to perils, which may turn these hopes and prophesies into illusions. The experience of life teaches us to be prepared for the worst. Our present prosperity seems too unparalleled to endure. But loose, vague fears, ought not to disturb us ; nor should they be propagated, because they often serve to fulfil themselves. The truth is, that we are a people singularly given to alarm, and very much on the ground on which the rich fear most about property. The greatness of our blessings makes us timid. As far as my knowledge of this community extends, the Union is most dear. It may be said of this, as of other social ties, that its strength cannot be fully known, till we are seriously called to dissolve it.

But, it is said, the South is passionate, and threatens to secede, if we agitate this subject of slavery. Is this no cause of alarm ? To this argument I would offer two answers. First, the South, passionate as it may be, is not insane. Does not the South know, that, in abandoning us on the ground of slavery, it would take the surest step towards converting the free States to intense and overwhelming abolitionism ? Would not slavery become from that moment the grand distinctive idea of the Southern Republic ? And would not its Northern rival, by instinct and necessity, found itself on the antagonist principle ? In such an event, there would be no need of anti-slavery societies, of abolition agitations, to convert the North. The blow that would sever the Union for this cause would produce an instantaneous explosion to shake the whole land. The moral sentiment against slavery, now kept down by the interests and duties which grow out of union, would burst its fetters, and be reinforced by the whole strength of the patriotic principle, as well as by all the prejudices and local passions which would follow disunion. Does not the South see that our exemption from the taint of slavery,

would, in this case, become our main boast? That we should cast the reproach of this institution into her teeth, in very different language from what is now used? That what is now tolerated in sister States, would be intensely hated in separate, rival communities? Let disunion on this ground take place, and then the North may become truly dangerous to the South. Then, real incendiaries, very different from those who now bear the name, might spring up among us. Then, fanaticism would borrow force and protection from national feeling. Then, in the unfriendly relations between the two communities, which would soon be created, and in the self-regarding policy which we should adopt, we should take into account the weakness which a servile population would bring on our adversaries. We should feel, that we have an ally in our rival's bosom, nor would that ally forget to look Northward for liberation. I say the South is not insane. Nothing but a palpable necessity could induce it to break off from the free States on the ground of slavery.

This leads me to observe, in the next place, that there is, and can be, no kind of necessity or warrant for separation furnished to the South, by the discussion of slavery at the North. This topic will indeed be agitated, and more and more freely; but no discussion, no agitation of slavery, no form of abolition, can produce such an excitement on the subject in the free States, as will furnish the slave States with any motive to encounter the terrible evils of separation. This subject deserves some consideration. Abolitionism may be viewed in two lights: first, as the organized array of societies against slavery; and next, as an individual sentiment, scattered through the whole population. In neither view can it drive the South to disunion, at least for a long time to come. Regarded as an organized body, Abolitionism will subsist and will influence opinion, but it will never gain an ascendancy in the free States. On this point my mind has never wavered. It nowhere carries with it the mass of the people, or the weight of opinion. It has brought no religious or political body under its influence. Fashion, wealth, sectarian prejudice, and political

ambition, are, for the most part, opposed to it. That the South should be driven by it to desperation, is impossible. Many of the obstacles to the ascendancy of this first form of Abolitionism will naturally be presented in my views of the second. I will here only observe, that, with the intelligence and state of feeling prevalent at the North, public opinion cannot be determined by associations, especially by one which takes Agitation for its motto. Agitation may be useful, in producing a speedy movement in favour of an object of clear utility, and about which opinions do not greatly differ. For example, in the case of Temperance, where men are generally of one mind, where opinion is fixed, where excitement is the great object to be accomplished, where men are to be roused to resist habits which they know to be wrong; in such a case, an array of numbers, a system of pledges, and multiplied public meetings, may do good. But, on a subject involving many practical difficulties and solemn consequences, and coming, as many think, into collision with great public interests, agitation will not now avail. Men distrust it, fear it, and resent as a wrong the violence with which the opinions of zealous men are forced on the community. Agitation may carry such a country as Ireland, where the people, besides being ignorant, are all inflamed with one sense of wrong, and every heart responds to the Agitator's cry. So it carried the British act of Emancipation, for the nation was ripe for action, and, for the most part, had no hostile prejudices to surrender. But an intelligent people, divided in opinion and feeling on a great subject, cannot be carried by storm, or be swept away by a fervent association. The ardent advocates, even of a good cause, if marshalled into an army, and joined in vehement onset on the prejudices of such a community, cannot but awaken re-action and obstinate repulsion; and will, too often, put themselves in the wrong by passionate movements, of which the foe is sure to profit. I now speak of associated agitation. Let the individual enthusiast, who acts from his own soul, agitate as much as he will. I would not say a word to stifle the full, bursting heart. But premeditated, organized agitation, is another

thing. Besides the difficulty already stated, it is apt to degenerate into noise and show, and to fall under suspicion of pretence, and, on this account, is less forgiven for what is deemed excess. I see, therefore, very serious obstacles to the triumphs of organized Abolitionism in a community like ours. It has, indeed, done good. Under all its disadvantages, it has roused many minds, but it cannot carry with it the people.

As to Abolitionism in its more general form, or regarded as an individual principle of settled, earnest opposition to slavery, this has taken deep root, and must grow and triumph. It is in harmony with our institutions, and with all the tendencies of modern civilization. It triumphs in Europe, and will flow in upon us from abroad more and more freely, in consequence of those improvements of intercourse which place Europe almost at our door. Still, it is far from being universal among us. There are obstacles as well as aids to its progress, in consequence of which, it is to make its way calmly, gradually, so that there is no possibility of any violent action from the freest discussion of slavery. There is no danger of an anti-slavery fever here, which will justify the South to itself in encountering the infinite hazards of disunion.

The prevalent state of feeling in the free States in regard to slavery is, indifference; an indifference strengthened by the notion of great difficulties attending the subject. The fact is painful, but the truth should be spoken. The majority of the people, even yet, care little about the matter. A painful proof of this insensibility was furnished about a year and a half ago, when the English West Indies were emancipated. An event surpassing this in moral grandeur, is not recorded in history. In one day, half a million, probably seven hundred thousand of human beings, were rescued from bondage, to full, unqualified freedom. The consciousness of wrongs, in so many breasts, was exchanged into rapturous, grateful joy. What shouts of thanksgiving broke forth from those liberated crowds! What new sanctity and strength were added to the domestic ties! What new hopes opened on future generations!

The crowning glory of this day was the fact, that the work of emancipation was wholly due to the principles of Christianity. The West Indies were freed, not by force, or human policy, but by the reverence of a great people for justice and humanity. The men who began and carried on this cause were Christian philanthropists; and they prevailed by spreading their own spirit through a nation. In this respect, the emancipation of the West Indies was a grander work than the redemption of the Israelites from bondage. This was accomplished by force, by outward miracles, by the violence of the elements. That was achieved by love, by moral power, by God, working not in the stormy seas, but in the depths of the human heart. And how was this day of emancipation, one of the most blessed days which ever dawned on the earth, received in this country? Whilst in distant England a thrill of gratitude and joy pervaded thousands and millions, we, the neighbours of the West Indies, and who boast of our love of liberty, saw the sun of that day rise and set, with hardly a thought of the scenes on which it was pouring its joyful light. The greatest part of our newspapers did not refer to the event. The great majority of the people had forgotten it. Such was the testimony we gave to our concern for the poor slave; and is it from discussions of slavery among such a people that the country is to be overturned?

It will undoubtedly be said, that our uncertainty as to the issues of West Indian emancipation, prevented our rejoicing in it. But does uncertainty so act, where the heart is deeply moved? Is it a part of human nature to wait for assurance, before it exults at events, in which its affections are involved? Does the new-born child receive no welcome, because we are not sure of the prosperity of his future years? Does the lover of freedom give no salutation, no benediction, to a people rising in defence of rights, or establishing free institutions, because the experiment of liberty may fail? Undoubtedly there were evils to be apprehended from West Indian emancipation; for when was a great social revolution ever accomplished, or a great abuse ever removed, without them? It was impossible for the slave and the master to change their old relations,

to reorganize society, without continuing to feel more or less the influences of the old system of oppression. Are the wounds of ages to be healed in a moment? Could a perfect social order be expected to rise from the ruins of slavery? But must corrupt systems be made perpetual, because of the chances of reform? In the case of the West India emancipation, we had more pledges of success than are usually given. We knew that the trial of liberty had been made in Antigua, without the occurrence of any of the evils which had been dreaded. The great transition from slavery to freedom had taken place in a day without disorder, without the slightest injury to property or life, with no excitement but overwhelming gratitude. Yet, as a people, we cared nothing for the liberation of the West Indian slave. With the exception of a few voices, the mighty chorus of praise to God, which ascended from the Gulf of Mexico and from Great Britain, found no response here.

This indifference to slavery has foundations among us, which are not to be removed in a day. One cause is to be found in the all-devouring passion for gain, accumulation, which leaves little leisure for sympathy with any suffering which does not meet our eye, and which will listen to no innovations, by which the old channels of trade and profit may be obstructed. Another cause is to be found in the sympathies of what are called the higher and more refined classes here, with the like classes at the South. The tide of fashion, no unimportant influence even in a republic, sets strongly against anti-slavery efforts. Another cause is, our position in regard to the coloured race. In Europe, the negro is known chiefly by report, and is, therefore, easily recognised as a man. His humanity is never questioned. Still more, he is an object for the imagination and the heart. He is known only as a wronged, suffering man. He is almost a picturesque being. Thousands and thousands in England, at the mention of the African slave, immediately recall to their minds the most affecting figure of the negro, as Darwin portrayed him, touching the earth with one knee, lifting up his chained hands, and exclaiming, "Am I not a man and a brother?" To us, the negro is no creature of imagination. We see him as he is. There

is nothing picturesque in his lot. On visiting the slave states, we see him practically ranked with inferior creatures, and taking the rank submissively. We hear from him shouts of boisterous laughter, much oftener than sighs or groans; and this laughter repels compassion, whilst it inspires something like contempt. We here have a hard task to perform. We have to conquer old and deep prejudices, and to see a true man in one, with whom we have associated ideas of degradation inconsistent with humanity. These are painful truths; but it is good to know the truth. One thing is plain, that free discussion of slavery is not likely to stir up in the free states rash, careless assaults on the institutions of the South, and so to endanger the Union. We who are called incendiaries, because we discuss this subject, do not kindle our fires among dry woods, but too often on fields of ice. A consuming conflagration is not to be feared.

I have now considered the objections to the free discussion of slavery at the North. This discussion is safe; still more, it is a duty, and must go on; and, under this and other influences, the anti-slavery spirit must spread and must prevail. Mr. Clay's speech will but aid the movement. The anti-slavery spirit may triumph slowly, but triumph it must and will. It may be thought, that, from my own showing, the success of this cause is not so sure as its friends are accustomed to boast. But notwithstanding all the obstacles which I have frankly stated, anti-slavery principles have made great progress, have become deep convictions in many souls, within a few years; and the impulse, far from being spent, continually gains strength. There are those who hope that the present movement is a temporary fanaticism. We are even told, that a distinguished Senator from the South, on the close of Mr. Clay's speech, repaid this effort for slavery with unbounded applause, and declared, that "Abolitionism was now down." But such men have not studied our times. Strange, that in an age, when great principles are stirring the human soul, and when the mass of men, who have hitherto slept, are waking up to thought, it should be imagined, that an individual, a name, a breath, can arrest the grand forward movements of society. When will states-

men learn, that there are higher powers than political motives, interests, and intrigues? When will they learn the might which dwells in truth? When will they learn, that the great moral and religious ideas, which have now seized on and are working in men's souls, are the most efficient, durable forces, which are acting in the world? When will they learn, that the past and present are not the future, but that the changes already wrought in society, are only forerunners, signs, and springs of mightier revolutions? Politicians, absorbed in near objects, are prophets only on a small scale. They may foretell the issues of the next election, though even here they are often baffled; but the breaking out of a deep moral conviction in the mass of men, is a mystery which they have little skill to interpret. The future of this country is to take its shape, not from the growing of cotton at the South, not from the struggles of parties or leaders for power or station; but from the great principles which are unfolding themselves, silently, in men's breasts. There is here, and through the civilized world, a steady current of thought and feeling in one direction. The old notion of the subjection of the many, for the comfort, ease, pleasure, and pride of the few, is fast wearing away. A far higher and more rational conception of freedom, than entered into the loftiest speculations of ancient times, is spreading itself, and is changing the face of society. "Equality before the laws," has become the watchword of all civilized states. The absolute worth of a human being is better understood, that is, his worth as an individual, or on his own account, and not merely as a useful tool to others. Christianity is more and more seen to attach a sacredness and unspeakable dignity to every man, because each man is immortal. Such is the current of human thought. Principles of a higher order are beginning to operate on society, and the dawn of these primal, everlasting lights, is a sure omen of a brighter day. This is the true sign of the coming ages. Politicians, seizing on the narrow, selfish principles of human nature, expect these to rule for ever. They hope, by their own machinery, to determine the movements of the world. But if history teaches any lesson, it is the impotence of statesmen; and, happily, this impotence is increasing every day, with the spread of lights and moral

force among the people. Would politicians study history with more care, they might learn, even from the dark times which are past, that interest is not, after all, the mightiest agent in human affairs; that the course of human events has been more determined, on the whole, by great principles, by great emotions, by feeling, by enthusiasm, than by selfish calculations, or by selfish men. In the great conflict between the Oriental and the Western World, which was decided at Thermopylæ and Marathon; in the last great conflict between Polytheism and Theism, begun by Jesus Christ, and carried on by his followers; in the Reformation of Luther; in the American Revolution; in these grandest epochs of history, what was it which won the victory? What were the mighty, all-prevailing powers? Not political management, not self-interest, not the lower principles of human nature; but the principles of freedom and religion, moral power, moral enthusiasm, the divine aspirations of the human soul. Great thoughts and great emotions have a place in human history, which no historian has hitherto given them, and the future is to be more determined by these, than the past. The anti-slavery spirit is not then to die under the breath of an orator. As easily might that breath blow out the sun.

Slavery must fall, because it stands in direct hostility to all the grand movements, principles, and reforms of our age, because it stands in the way of an advancing world. One great idea stands out amidst the discoveries and improvements of modern times. It is, that man is not to exercise arbitrary, irresponsible power, over man. To restrain power, to divide and balance it, to create responsibility for its just use, to secure the individual against its abuse, to substitute law for private will, to shield the weak from the strong, to give to the injured the means of redress, to set a fence round every man's property and rights, in a word, to secure liberty,—such, under various expressions, is the great object on which philosophers, patriots, philanthropists, have long fixed their thoughts and hopes. It is remarkable, and one of the happy omens of the times, that even absolute governments have reached, in a measure, this grand idea. They present themselves as the guardians of liberty. They profess their desire and purpose to sustain

equal laws, under which all men, from the highest to the lowest, shall find effectual protection for their rights. The distinguished Prussian historian, Raumer, in his *Letters on England*, maintains, that his own government, which foreigners call despotic, does not rest on private will, and that it ensures, on the whole, greater freedom to the subject, than the British people can boast. Thus despotism does homage to the great ideas and spirit of our times; and yet in the midst of this progress, in the face of this universal reverence for human rights, the slave-holder stands apart, and sets up his claim to ownership of his fellow-creatures, and insists on arbitrary, irresponsible rule, and makes his will a law, and enforces it by degrading punishments. And can this power stand? Is it able to resist the moral power of the world? Can it withstand a higher power, that of Eternal Justice, before which all worlds bow, and to which the highest orders of beings must give account?

I have now finished my remarks on the topics suggested by Mr. Clay's speech. I began them with stating, that I should avoid, as much as possible, all personalities; and I have aimed throughout to look only at the system, not at individuals. I am aware, however, that some of my remarks must seem to have a very unfavourable bearing on the slave-holder; for how can the evils and crimes of a system be held up, without implicating more or less those who sustain it? To prevent then all misapprehension, I wish to say, that whilst I think slave-holders in general highly culpable for upholding a system of wrong, which has been so plainly exposed, I do not regard slave-holding as a proof of the necessary absence of moral and religious principle. Our nature is strangely inconsistent, and experience continually teaches us, that faults and sins, on which the eye of conscience has not been distinctly turned, may consist with real virtue. A man living in a community, all of whose members join in passionate support of an evil institution, must have an energy of thought, a moral force, a moral independence which few can boast, in order to see and resist and renounce the wrong. No moral trial on earth is perhaps so overpowering. The light, which prevails in other regions, enters most slowly this compact, dense mass of moral error. I cannot forget this in judging the slave-

holder. I remember, too, that he is not merely a slaveholder. He sustains the natural, innocent, purifying relations of domestic life, of private friendship, of country, and of Christian worship, and in these he may be exemplary; in these, there are women of the South eminently faithful. I know it is said, that in these acknowledgments I weaken my testimony against slavery; but truth is dearer than policy. I cannot hold it back. Could I liberate all the slaves, by misrepresenting the slaveholder, I would not do it. The primary work of a man is, not to liberate slaves, but to be just, to render to all their due, to do what is right, be the cost what it may; and all benevolent enterprises, which have not their origin and rule in this sovereign principal of duty, are "splendid sins." The slaveholders commit a great wrong, many without consciousness of the wrong, and many with entire indifference to the moral character of slaveholding. And in all this they resemble other societies of men here and abroad. There is much unconscious wrong doing, and still more, much conscious sacrifice of right to interest, all the world over. This should not prevent rebuke of other communities; but should check invidious comparison, and the spirit of self-exaltation. We of the North have reason and are bound to condemn the enormous wrongs practised at the South; but have we a right to boast of ourselves as better than our neighbours? Is not the selfish spirit of gain, which is blinding multitudes at the South to the injustice of slavery, very rife here? Were this institution rooted here, should we not cling as a people to it, as obstinately as others? Are none of us now reconciled to it by the profits it affords them? England reproaches our slavery, and she cannot do it too solemnly. But has England a right to boast over the slaveholder? Who can fathom the depths of guilt and woe in that rich prosperous island? Is there another spot on earth, in which so many crimes and agonies are accumulated as in London? Where else on earth is so shocking a contrast to be seen of boundless luxury, and unutterable wretchedness? What a work has philanthropy to do for the ignorant, intemperate, half-famished crowds of Ireland and Great Britain! Her nobles and merchants, indeed, scatter their thousands and ten thousands among the poor. But do they retrench one

indulgence or one ostentatious display, or resolutely meet the great question, how the terrible evils which weigh down and threaten society are to be substantially redressed? I say not these things in the spirit of retaliation towards England. I ask from her just indignant remonstrance against our wrong doing. But I would show, that, in assailing slavery, I am not blind to all other evils, that I mean not to set apart the slave-holder as alone deserving rebuke, and that I acknowledge the justice of many of his reproofs of these free States and of Europe. God alone knows the chief offender. The slave-holder indeed is chargeable with the peculiar guilt of ordaining, and upholding with set purpose, a system of enormous injustice. Slavery is a creature of human will and choice, and at the same time the greatest wrong and insult on human nature. I therefore cry aloud against it. Of the individuals who defend and perpetuate the system, I am sure that the best are deeply injured by it; but among them, there are better than myself. I do not fix their rank in a world of transgressors. I desire to lift up the wronged and oppressed. I leave to a higher Judge, the heart, the sins, the virtues of the oppressor.

I have now concluded my remarks on the topics suggested by Mr. Clay's speech; and here you may expect me to close this long communication. But believing, as I do, that my engagements and duties will not allow me to write again on slavery, I am inclined to relieve my mind of all its burdens on this subject. Allow me then to say a few words on a topic, which has given me many painful thoughts, the more painful, because so few have seemed to share my feelings. I refer to that gross outrage on rights and liberty, the burning of the Hall of Freedom in Philadelphia. I have felt this the more, because this Hall was erected for free discussion, was dedicated to liberty of speech. Undoubtedly it was especially designed to give the Abolitionists a chance of being heard; but it was also intended to give the same privilege to others, who, in consequence of having adopted unpopular opinions, might be excluded from the places commonly devoted to public meetings. This building was associated with the dearest right of an intelligent, spiritual

being, that of communicating thought and receiving such communication in return ; more intimately associated with it than any other edifice in the country. And this was stormed by a mob ; a peaceful assemblage was driven from its walls ; and afterwards it was levelled to the earth by fire.

Various circumstances conspired to take this out of the class of common crimes. It was not the act of the coarse, passionate multitude. It was not done in a transport of fury. The incendiaries proceeded leisurely in their work, and distinctly understood, that they were executing the wish and purpose of a great majority of the people. Passionate outbreaks may be forgiven. An act performed by the reckless few does not alarm us, because we know that a moral force subsists in the community to counteract it. But when individuals, to whom we look for a restraining moral power, undertake deliberately the work of the reckless and violent, then the outrage on law and right wears a singularly dark and menacing aspect. Such a community may well feel the foundations of social order tottering beneath them. After the mob of Philadelphia, who wonders at the mob of Harrisburg ?

Another aggravation of this act was, that the blameless character of those who had erected and were occupying the Hall of Freedom, was distinctly understood. The assemblage thronging this edifice, was not made up of profligates, of the false, the lawless, the profane. On that occasion were met together citizens of Philadelphia and visitors from other cities and States, who were second to none in purity of life ; and they had convened in obedience to what they believed, however erroneously, the will of God, and to accomplish what seemed to them a great work of justice and humanity. I doubt whether, at that hour, there were collected in any other single spot of the land so many good and upright men and women, so many sincere friends of the race. In that crowd was John G. Whittier, a man whose genius and virtues would do honour to any city whose poetry bursts from the soul with the fire and indignant energy of an ancient prophet, and whose noble simplicity of character is said to be the delight of all who know him. In that

crowd was Lucretia Mott, that beautiful example of womanhood. Who that has heard the tones of her voice, and looked on the mild radiance of her benign and intelligent countenance, can endure the thought, that such a woman was driven by a mob, from a spot to which she had gone, as she religiously believed, on a mission of Christian sympathy? There were many others, worthy associates of those whom I have named, religious men, prepared to suffer in the cause of humanity, devoted women, whose hearts were burdened with the infinite indignities heaped on their sex by slavery. Such were the people who were denied the protection of the laws; denied the privilege granted to the most profligate political party, and even to a meeting of Atheists; treated as outcasts, as the refuse and offscouring of the world. In them was revived the experience of the first witnesses to the Christian faith. Happily, Christianity has not wholly failed to improve society. At first, the disciple himself was destroyed; now only his edifice;—and this is certainly some progress of the world.

And what was the mighty cause of this outrage? A general reply is, that the Abolitionists were fanatics. Be it so. Is fanaticism a justification of this summary justice? What more common than this fever in our churches? How does it infect whole sects! What more common in our political meetings? Must the walls within which fanatics meet be purged by desolating fire? Will not then the whole land be lighted by the flames? Shall I be told, that the fanaticism of the Abolitionists is of peculiar atrocity—that they are marked, set apart, by the monstrosity of their doctrines? These doctrines are, the brotherhood of the human race, and the right of every human being to his own person and to the protection of equal laws. Such are the heresies, that must be burned out with fire, and buried under the ruins of the temple where they are preached! Undoubtedly there may be crimes, so unnatural, so terrible to a community, that a people may be forgiven, if, deeming the usual forms of justice too slow, they assume the perilous office of inflicting speedy punishment. But that the processes of law, that the chartered rights of a free people should be set aside to punish men, who come together to protest against the greatest wrong in the land, and whose

fanaticism consists in the excess of their zeal for the oppressed; this is a doctrine, which puts to shame the dark ages, and which cannot long keep its ground in our own.

But this general charge of fanaticism is not the main defence of this hall-burning. The old cry of "danger to the Union," is set up. Abolitionism was to be committed to the flames, because it threatened to separate the States. I shall not of course repeat what I have already said on this topic, but I will only ask, what will be the effect of burning up every edifice, which gives shelter to the supposed enemies of the Union? At this very moment, one of these twenty-six States has virtually assumed the right of war, which the Constitution confers on the General Government, and would inevitably drive us into hostilities with one of the most powerful nations of Europe, if the insanity of the contest did not make it next to impossible; and, in so doing, it has given a precedent, more menacing to the Union than any thing in our history, with the single exception of the Nullification or States-Rights movement. And shall all, who favour this usurpation, be forbidden to meet but at the peril of mobs and flames? In this case, might not some halls of legislation meet the fate of the Hall of Freedom? I must protest against the disposition to make the crime of endangering the Union a sufficient cause for houseburning. The nerves of our people are particularly sensitive on this point, and Incendiarism will become the fashion, if this plea will suffice for it. Every house-holder should lift up his voice against the dangerous doctrine.

But we have not yet touched the great cause of the conflagration of the Hall of Freedom. Something worse than fanaticism or separation of the Union, was the impulse to this violence. We are told that white people and black people sat together on the benches of the Hall, and were even seen walking together in the streets! This was the unheard-of atrocity which the virtues of the people of Philadelphia could not endure. They might have borne the dissolution of the national tie; but this junction of black and white was too much for human patience to sustain. And has it indeed come to this? For such a cause, are mobs and fires to be let loose on our persons and most costly buildings? What! has not an American citizen a right

to sit and walk with whom he will? Is this common privilege of humanity denied us? Is society authorized to choose our associates? Must our neighbour's tastes as to friendship and companionship control our own? Have the feudal times come back to us, when to break the law of caste was a greater crime than to violate the laws of God? What must Europe have thought, when the news crossed the ocean of the burning of the Hall of Freedom, because white and coloured people walked together in the streets? Europe might well open its eyes in wonder. On that continent, with all its aristocracy, the coloured man mixes freely with his fellow-creatures. He passes for a man. He sometimes receives the countenance of the rich, and has even found his way into the palaces of the great. In Europe, the doctrine would be thought too absurd for refutation, that a coloured man, of pure morals and piety, of cultivated intellect and refined manners, was not a fit companion for the best in the land. What must Europe have said, when brought to understand, that in a republic, founded on the principles of human rights and equality, people are placed beyond the protection of the laws, for treating an African as a man. This Philadelphia doctrine deserves no mercy. What an insult is thrown on human nature, in making it a heinous crime to sit or walk with a human being, whoever he may be!

It just occurs to me, that I have forgotten the circumstance, which filled to overflowing the cup of Abolitionist wickedness in Philadelphia. The great offence was this, that certain young women of anti-slavery faith, were seen to walk the streets with coloured young men! Of the truth of this allegation, which has been denied, I am not able to judge; but allowing its correctness, I must think, that to violate the majesty of the laws, and to convulse a whole city, because a few young women thought fit to manifest in this way their benevolence towards a despised race,

" Resembles ocean into tempest wrought
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly."

Offences against manners are wisely left to the scourge of public opinion, which proves itself, in such cases, a more effectual as well as more merciful discipline than burning

or the gallows. If ridicule and indignation will not put down supposed misdemeanors of this class, what will force avail? May I be here allowed to counsel my fair abolitionist friends, (if they have really fallen into the "unpardonable transgression" laid to their charge,) to respect hereafter the usages of society in regard to their communications with the other sex? If their anti-slavery zeal compels them to bear testimony against the prejudice which excludes the coloured people from the society of the whites, let them choose for their associates the women of the despised caste. With less defiance of opinion, they will thus give equal expression to their interest in the wronged. I believe, however, that the less conspicuous their zeal in this and other public movements, the better. There are none, for whom I feel a deeper and more affectionate solicitude than for the young of the other sex; and when I think of their inexperience, and of the strength of their sensibility, and then consider how exposed they are, on occasions of struggle and excitement, to unconscious imprudences, which may throw a shade over their characters not soon to be dispelled, and which, in their calmer hours, may visit them with secret upbraidings, or with fears of having started from the proper path, I cannot but desire, that, whilst they open their hearts to all generous sympathies, they should postpone the public manifestation of their zeal to a riper age.

The violence, which was offered the Abolitionists for their reception of the coloured people to freer social intercourse, was the more aggravated, because, if they erred in the matter, their motive was a generous one, not got up for the occasion, but proved to be sincere by their whole conduct. They say, that the coloured race, ground as they have been in the dust by long tyranny, and still suffering under prejudices which forbid their elevation, are entitled to peculiar regard from the disciples of Him who came to raise the fallen, "to seek and save the lost." They look on this people with peculiar sympathy, because subjected to peculiar hardships. With this view, they are anxious to break down the distinction, or at least to diminish the distance, between the black man and the white, believing that in this way only the degrading influences of the injuries of years can

be overcome. Allow this to be an error ; is it not a generous one ? Is there nothing holy in sympathy with the wronged ? Are feelings of benevolent concern, for whatever portion of our race, to be insulted, and to bring down violence on our heads, because they transgress conventional rules and the forms of "good society ?" That ignorant and coarse people should treat the motives of the Abolitionists with scorn, cannot surprise us ; but that any who belong to what is called the respectable and refined class, should join the fierce multitude in persecuting men of worth and humanity, admits no excuse. Does it not show, that the line of separation between the high and low is not as broad as we sometimes imagine ; that much which passes for refinement is mere gloss ; and that when the passions are stirred up by the concurrence of numbers, "the friends of order" can set laws at defiance as boldly as the multitude ?

This outrage, if viewed in its political aspects, deserves severe reprobation. Mob-law, in this country, ought always to be frowned down. It is an invasion of the fundamental principle of our institutions, of the sovereignty of the people, and the more dangerous, because it seems to the multitude to be an assertion of the principle which it overthrows. The sovereignty of the people has here but one mode of manifestation, and that is, the laws. It can express itself in no other way ; and, consequently, a mob, in forcibly suspending the laws, and in substituting its own will for that which the legitimate organs of the people have proclaimed, usurps, for a time, the sovereignty of the state, and is virtually rebellion. In a despotism the laws are of less moment than in a free country, because in the former there is a force above the laws, an irresistible will, which has at its disposal a subservient soldiery and summary punishments, to maintain something like order in the state. But in a republic there is nothing higher than the laws ; and in shaking the authority of these, the whole social edifice is shaken. Reverence for the laws is the essential spirit, the guardian power of a free state. Take this away, and no physical force can take its place. The force is in the excited multitude, and, in proportion as it is roused against law, it prepares the way, and constitutes a demand for a more regular, despotic power, which, bad as it is, is better than the tyranny of crowds. There is, indeed, as I

have intimated, one case where popular commotion does, comparatively, little harm. I mean that which is excited by some daring crime, which the laws sternly forbid, and which sends an electric thrill of horror through a virtuous community. In such a case, the public without law do the work of law, and enforce those natural, eternal principles of right on which all legislation should rest. Even this violence, however, is dangerous. But, be it ever so blameless, who can bring under this head the outrage offered to Abolitionists, men who had broken no law, and whose distinction was, that they had planted themselves on the grounds of natural and everlasting right?

This outrage against the Abolitionists made little impression on the country at large. It was pronounced wrong, of course; but then we were told that the Abolitionists were so imprudent, so fierce, so given to denunciation, so intolerant towards all who differ from them, that they had no great claim to sympathy. Everywhere the excesses of the Abolitionists are used to palliate the persecution which they suffer. But are they the only intolerant people in the country? Is there a single political party which does not deal as freely in denunciation? Is there a religious sect which has not its measure of bitterness? I ask, as before, if fierce denunciation is to be visited with flames, where will the conflagration stop?

In thus speaking, let me not be considered as blind to the errors of the Abolitionists. My interest in their object increases my pain at their defects. When I consider them as having espoused a just and holy cause, I am peculiarly grieved by the appearances of passionate severity in their writings, speeches, and movements. Such men ought to find in the grandeur, purity, and benevolence of their end, irresistible motives to self-control, to a spirit of equity and mildness, to a calm, lofty trust in God. I grieve that, in an age when the power of gentleness and meekness is beginning to be understood, they have sought strength in very different weapons. I do not deny their error; but I say, let there be some proportion between the punishment and the offence. Is nothing to be pardoned to men who have meditated on great wrongs until their spirits are deeply stirred? Is vehemence in such men the unpardonable sin? Must we rigidly insist that they shall weigh every word before they speak? When all England

was on fire with the injuries of the slave, is it wonderful that men in this country, where the evil is most towering, should echo in louder tones the cry which came to them over the ocean? Is it wonderful that women, thinking of more than a million of their own sex, at no great distance, exposed to degradation and prostitution, should, in their grief and indignation, repel every extenuating plea for the supporters of these abominations? Was it possible that none should speak on this subject but the wise and prudent? Does not every great cause gather round itself vehement spirits? Must no evil be touched till we have assurance that it shall be shaken and subverted by rule? We bear extravagance and vehemence elsewhere, without burning down men's houses. Why this singular sensitiveness to anti-slavery vehemence, except it be that slavery, which so many call an evil with the lips, has never come as an evil to their consciences and hearts?

But, it is said, the Abolitionists injure a good cause. Be it so. I think they have done it harm as well as good. But is not this the common course of human affairs? What good cause is not harmed, and sometimes thrown back by its best friends? In the present imperfect state of our nature, men seldom take a strong hold on any great object without falling into excess. Enthusiasm, by which I mean a disproportionate strength of feeling and emotion, such as interferes more or less with the judgment, seems almost inseparable from earnestness. The calm reason, the single idea of Right, the principle of pure love, such as it exists in God, serene and unimpassioned,—these divine impulses seldom of themselves carry men through great enterprises. Human passionateness mixes with higher influences. This is to be lamented, and much evil is done; but we must endure enthusiasm with its excesses, or sink into a lifeless monotony. These excesses we ought to rebuke and discourage; but we must not hunt them down as the greatest crimes. We must take heed, lest in our war against rashness we quench all the generous sentiments of human nature. It is natural to desire that evils should be removed gently, imperceptibly, without agitation; and the more of this quiet process the better. But it is not ordinarily by such processes that the mysterious providence of God purifies society. Religion and freedom have made their way through struggles and storms. Established evils naturally

oppose an iron front to reform ; and the spirit of reform, gathering new vehemence from oppositions, pours itself forth in passionate efforts. Man is not good enough yet to join invincible courage, zeal, and struggle, with all-suffering meekness. But must conflict with evil cease because it will be marred with human imperfection ? Must the burning spirit lock up its sympathies with suffering humanity because not sure of being always self-possessed ? Do we forgive nothing to the warm-hearted ? Should we not labour to temper and guide aright excessive zeal in a virtuous cause instead of persecuting it as the worst of crimes ?

The Abolitionists deserve rebuke ; but let it be proportioned to the offence. They do wrong in their angry denunciation of slave-holders. But is calling the slave-holder hard names a crime of unparalleled aggravation ? Is it not, at least, as great a crime to spoil a man of his rights and liberty, to make him a chattel, and trample him in the dust ? And why shall the latter offender escape with so much gentler rebuke ? I know, as well as the slave-holder, what it is to bear the burden of hard names. The South has not been sparing of its invectives in return for my poor efforts against slavery. I understand the evil of reproach ; and I am compelled to pronounce it a very slight one, and not to be named in comparison with bondage ; and why is it that he who inflicts the former should be called to drink the cup of wrath to the very dregs, whilst he who inflicts the latter receives hardly a mild rebuke ?

I say these things not as a partisan of the Abolitionists, but from a love of justice. They seem to me greatly wronged by the unparalleled persecution to which they have been exposed ; and the wronged should never want a defender. But I am not of them. In the spirit of many of them I see much to condemn. I utterly disapprove their sweeping denunciations. I fear that their scorn of expediency may degenerate into recklessness. I fear that as a natural if not necessary consequence of their multiplied meetings, held chiefly for excitement, their zeal must often be forced, got up for effect, a product of calculation, not a swell of the heart. I confide in them the less the more they increase. I fear that their resort to political action will impair their singleness of purpose and their moral power. I distrust the system of association and agitation in a cause like this. But because I see among them somewhat to

fear and blame, must I shut my eyes on more which I ought to commend? Must not men of pure and lofty aims be honoured, because, like every thing human, they are not free from fault? I respect the Abolitionists for maintaining great principles with courage and fervour amidst scorn and violence. Can men have a higher claim to respect? In their body, amidst prejudiced, narrow-minded, conceited, self-seeking members, such as are found in all associations, there is a large proportion of uncompromising, single-hearted friends of truth, right, and freedom; and such men are securities against the adoption of criminal ends or criminal means. In their front rank, perhaps at their head, is Gerrit Smith; a man worthy of all honour for his overflowing munificence, for his calm yet invincible moral courage, for his Christian liberality, embracing men of every sect and name, and for his deep, active, inexhaustible sympathy with the sinful, suffering, and oppressed. In their ranks may also be found our common friend, Charles Follen, that genuine man, that heroic spirit, whose love of freedom unites, in rare harmony, the old Roman force with Christian love, in whom we see the generous, rash enthusiasm of his youth, tempered by time and trial into a most sweet and winning virtue. I could name others honoured and dear. I do not, for the sake of such, shut my eyes on the defects of the association; but that it should be selected for outrage and persecution is a monstrous wrong, against which solemn testimony ought to be borne.

There is one consolation attending persecution. It often exalts the spirit of the sufferer, and often covers with honour those whom it had destined to shame. Who made Socrates the most venerable name of antiquity? The men who mixed for him the cup of hemlock, and drove him as a criminal from the world which he had enlightened. Providence teaches us the doctrine of retribution very touchingly in the fact, that future ages regard with peculiar reverence the memories of men, who, in their own times, were contemned, abhorred, hunted like wild beasts, and destroyed by fire or sword, for their fidelity to truth. That the Abolitionists have grown strong under outrage, we know; and in this I should rejoice, were their cause ever so bad; because persecution must be worse, and its defeat must be a good. I wish that persecution, if not checked by principle,

may be stayed, by seeing that it fights against itself, and builds up those whom it toils to destroy. How long the Abolitionists will be remembered, I know not; but, as long as they live in history, they will wear as a crown the sufferings which they have so firmly borne. Posterity will be just to them; nor can I doubt what doom posterity will pronounce on the mobs or single men who have laboured to silence them by brutal force. I should be glad to see them exchanging their array of affiliated societies for less conspicuous and artificial means of action. But let them not do this from subserviency to opinion, or in opposition to their sense of right. Let them yield nothing to fear. Let them never be false to that great cause, which they have fought for so manfully, Freedom of Speech. Let them never give countenance to the doctrine, which all tyrants hold, that material power, physical pain, is mightier than the convictions of Reason, than the principle of Duty, than the love of God and mankind. Sooner may they pine and perish in prisons, sooner bleed or be strangled by the executioner, than surrender their deliberate principles to lawless violence.

In the remarks now made on the recent outrage at Philadelphia, I have felt myself bound to use great plainness of speech. Had I consulted my feelings, I should have been silent. In that city I have old and dear friends, and have received hospitalities, which I remember with gratitude. But we are not allowed to "confer with flesh and blood." I beg however to say, in order to prevent misinterpretation, that I have not thought, for a moment, of holding up Philadelphia as the worst of cities. I do not infer from a single tumult the character of a vast population. How many thousands of that metropolis took no part in the transaction under consideration! And of those who gave it their active or passive sanction, how many thousands were hurried on by imitation and sympathy, were swept away by a common impulse, without comprehending the import of the deed! In a popular ferment, individuals lay aside themselves for a time, and do what they would shrink from, if left to act on their separate responsibility. In all cities it is true of the vast majority of men, that their consciences cannot stand alone. Their principles, as they call them, are echoes of general

sentiment. Their sense of duty, unpropped by opinion, totters, and too often falls. One of the saddest views of society is, the almost universal want of self-determined, self-subsistent virtue. It is therefore no sign of unparalleled depravity, that a community proves false to great principles in seasons of excitement. All great cities abound in ignorance, prejudice, passion, selfish conformity to the world and moral corruption in its grosser and more refined forms; and that these bitter fountains should sometimes burst forth, is a matter of course. I ascribe to no city precedence in virtue or crime. I would only say, that Philadelphia has placed herself more conspicuously than other cities, on a bad eminence, and she must hold it, until buildings devoted to Liberty of Speech can stand unharmed on her soil.

I now finish this long letter. Your patience, my dear Sir, has not, I trust, been exhausted. Whether this communication will answer the public ends which I have proposed, I know not; but it will do one good of a personal nature. It will be a memorial, however brief, of a friendship, which began in our youth, and which has withstood the vicissitudes of so many years, that we may expect it to go down with us to our graves. It pleases me that our names should be associated in a work, which, though written in haste, and for a temporary exigency, yet reflects something of both our minds. It is fit that the thoughts unfolded in this letter should be addressed to one with whom I have conversed long and familiarly on the great interests of human nature. I owe you much for the light and strength you have given me, and especially for the faith and hope, which, under much personal suffering and depression, you have cherished and expressed in regard to the destinies of our race. We have given much of our sympathy to the multitude. We have felt more for the many who are forgotten, than for the few who shine; and our great inquiry has been, how the mass of men may be raised from ignorance and sensuality, to a higher social, intellectual, moral, and religious life. We have rejoiced together in the progress already made by individuals and communities; but a voice has come to us from the depths of human suffering, from the abuses of the social state, from the teachings of Jesus Christ, urging the need of new struggle with giant evils, and of new efforts for the diffusion of comforts, refinements, quickening

truths, enlightened piety, and disinterested virtue. A few years will bring us to our journey's end. To the last, I trust, we shall speak words of blessing to our race, and words of encouragement to all who toil and suffer for its good. Through God's grace, we hope for another life; but that life we believe will, in some respects, be one with this. Our deep sympathies with the great human family will, we believe, survive the grave. We shall then rejoice in the interpretation of the dark mysteries of the present state, of the woes and oppressions now so rife on earth. May it not be hoped that, instead of our present poor and broken labours, we shall then render services to our brethren, worthy of that nobler life? But the future will reveal its own secrets. It is enough to know, that this human world, of which we form a portion, lives, suffers, and is moving onward, under the eye and care of the Infinite Father. Before his pure omnipotent goodness all oppressions must fall; and under his reign, our highest aspirations, prayers, and hopes for suffering humanity, must, sooner or later, receive an accomplishment beyond the power of prophecy to utter, or of thought to comprehend.

NOTES.

Note A, page 16.

As the page here referred to was passing through the press, I understood, that it was maintained by some, that the treatment which Abolition petitions had received from Congress was not so peculiar as I had supposed; and I state this, that the reader may enquire for himself. For one, I feel little disposition to enquire. It is very possible, that, in this world of tyranny and usurpation, scattered precedents may be found, which, if used for interpreting and defining our rights, would reduce them all to insignificance. A man, jealous of his rights, will not yield them to this or any other kind of logic. We have here the case of a great number of petitions, from all parts of the free states, and from citizens of intelligence and blameless character, which, before being presented, were denied by a resolution of Congress the usual notice and consideration. It was not the case of a single petition, coming from a half insane man, from an eccentric schemer, bearing on its face the marks of mental aberration, or asking for something palpably absurd and unconstitutional. The petitions of the Abolitionists greatly exceeded in number all the other petitions to Congress taken together. They represented large masses of citizens, who prayed for what is pronounced constitutional by our wisest men. And Congress resolved, before these petitions were offered, that, on being presented, they should be laid on the table without debate, and that no member should have the privilege of saying a word in their behalf, or of calling them up for consideration or for any action in relation to them at a future time. Has anything like this ever occurred before? Or if it has, we will go to such precedents for an interpretation of the right of petition? Is it not plain, that, after this measure, party spirit can never want pretexts for rejecting any and all petitions, be they what they may? To say that, because these petitions passed through the form of being laid on the table, the right was not touched, strikes me as one of those evasions, which will do for a court of law, but which is an insult to present to a great nation. Suppose that Congress, at the beginning of a session, should ordain, that an aperture of certain dimensions should be made on the clerk's table, and be connected by a tube with the cellar or common sewer; and should then ordain, that by far the greater number of petitions, to be presented during the session, should be committed to the part of the table occupied by the opening, so as to sink immediately and never be heard of more—what man of common sense, who knows the difference between words and things, or what freeman, who cares a rush for his rights, would not say that the right of petition had been virtually annulled? Why not openly reject the petitions without this mockery? Do we not know, that it is from side-blows that liberty has most to fear? It is very possible that legal subtlety may find precedents for the course pursued by Congress, just as it may

find authorities to prove that we have no right to our own persons, but may be sold as chattels. But such reasonings to a freeman carry their answer on their own front. Human rights are too sacred, too substantial, to be refined and attenuated into shadows by ingenious comparison of precedents and authorities. I take the ground, that the right of petition is *something*, and of course that there is a fatal fallacy in the reasoning which would reduce it to *nothing*. I would recommend to my readers a "Letter of the Honourable Caleb Cushing to the people of Massachusetts," in which this subject is discussed with great clearness and ability. It should be circulated as a tract. The public are also much indebted to the Honourable J. Q. Adams, for his unshrinking energy in maintaining the right of petition.

I say this from no particular interest in the present case. I doubt, whether the agitation of slavery in Congress is to do good to the country or to the cause of Emancipation; whether Abolition petitions bring the subject before the people, either at the North or South, in the manner most likely to produce conviction. I look at the matter without reference to present parties. One of the sacred rights of the people has been touched, and this should never be done without expressions of jealousy and reprobation. The strongest political influence in this country is party spirit; a selfish, unrighteous, unscrupulous spirit, impatient of restraint, and always ready to sacrifice the provisions of the Constitution to present purposes and immediate triumph. One of the most solemn duties of patriotism is to guard our rights from the touch of this harpy. No precedents of encroachment must be yielded to party spirit, for it will push them to extremes. No bulwarks, which our fathers have erected round our liberties, must be surrendered. The dangers of liberty are always great from human passions and selfishness; great under the freest institutions, and sometimes greater from what is called the popular party than from any other; and for this plain reason, that this party has formed the bad habit of calling itself "the people," and easily deludes itself into the belief, that, being "the people," it may take freedoms with the Constitution, and use its powers with little restraint. This delusion is what constitutes the danger to liberty from mobs; mobs call themselves "the people."

Note to page 25.

I have allowed on this page, that slavery wears a milder aspect at the South than in other countries. I ought to inform my readers, that this is denied by some who have enquired into the matter. A pamphlet or larger volume is announced at New York, in which the subject of the *treatment* of slaves at the South is to be particularly considered. The work is said to be the result of patient enquiries, and full proofs of its statements are promised. Those at the North, who believe in the mildness of Southern Slavery, will do well to examine the publication.

LECTURE ON WAR,

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

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Price 1 s.

"La guerre est le plus grand
des maux dont les dieux
affligent les hommes."
Télémaque Bk 4.



P R E F A C E .

THIS Lecture was delivered in the beginning of the last year. It was prepared with a distinct knowledge of the little interest taken in the subject by the people at large, and was prepared on that very account. It is now published, in consequence of fresh proofs of the insensibility of the mass of this community to the crimes and miseries of war. For a few weeks this calamity has been brought distinctly before us; we have been driven by one of the States into a hostile position towards a great European power; and the manner in which the subject has been treated in and out of Congress, is a sad proof of the very general want of Christian and philanthropic views of the subject, as well as of strange blindness to our national and individual well-being. One would think, that the suggestion of a war with England, would call forth one strong, general burst of opposing feelings. Can a more calamitous event, with the exception of civil war, be imagined? What other nation can do us equal harm? With what other nation do we hold equally profitable connexions? To what other are we bound by such strong and generous ties? We are of

one blood. We speak one language. We have a common religion. We have the noble bond of free institutions ; and to these two countries, above all others, is the cause of freedom on earth entrusted by Providence. A war with England would, to a great extent, sweep our ships from the seas, cut off our intercourse with the world, shut up our great staples, palsy the spirit of internal improvement, and smite with languor, if not death, our boldest enterprises. It would turn to the destruction of our fellow-creatures vast resources, which are now working out for us unparalleled prosperity. It would load us with taxes and public debts, and breed internal discontents with which a free government contends at fearful odds in the midst of war. Instead of covering the ocean with the sails of a beneficent commerce, we should scour it with privateers, that is, as legalized pirates. Our great cities would be threatened with invasion ; and the din of industry in the streets of this metropolis would be stilled :—And all this would come upon us at a moment, when the country is pressing forward to wealth, greatness and every kind of improvement, with an impulse, a free joyous activity, which has no parallel in the history of the world. And these immense sacrifices are to be made for a tract of wild land, perhaps not worth the money, which it has cost us within a few weeks past, if we take into account the expenses of Maine, and the losses which the whole country has suffered by interruption of trade.

But this is not all. We are not to suffer alone. We should inflict in such a war deep wounds on England, not only on her armed bands, on her rich merchants, on her wide-spread interests, but on vast numbers of her

poor population, who owe subsistence to the employment furnished by the friendly intercourse of the two countries. Thousands and ten thousands of her laborers would be reduced to want and misery. Nor would it be any mitigation of these evils to a man of humanity, that we were at war with the government of England.

And this is not all. A war between these countries would be felt through the whole civilized world. The present bears no resemblance to those half-barbarous ages, when nations stood apart, frowning on one another in surly independence. Commerce is binding all nations together; and of this golden chain England and America are the chief links. The relations between these countries cannot become hostile, without deranging, more or less, the intercourse of all other communities, and bringing evils on the whole Christian world.

Nor is this all. War can hardly spring up between two great countries without extending beyond them. This fire naturally spreads. The peace of nations is preserved by a kind of miracle. The addition of a new cause of conflict is always to be dreaded; but never more than at this moment, when communities are slowly adjusting themselves to a new order of things. All nations may be drawn into the conflict, which we may thoughtlessly begin; and if so, we shall have to answer for wide and prolonged slaughters, from which we should recoil with horror, could they be brought plainly before our eyes.

And these evils would be brought on the world at a moment of singular interest and promise to society;

after an unparalleled duration of peace; when a higher civilization seems to be dawning on Christendom; when nations are every where waking up to develop their own resources; when the conquests of industry, art, and science are taking the place of those of war; when new facilities of intercourse are bringing countries from their old unsocial distance into neighborhood; and when the greatest of all social revolutions is going on, that is, the elevation of the middling and laboring classes, of the multitude of the human race. To throw the firebrand of war among the nations at this period, would be treason against humanity and civilization, as foul as was ever perpetrated. The nation which does this, must answer to God and to society for very criminal resistance to the progress of the race. Every year, every day of peace is a gain to mankind, for it adds some strength to the cords which are drawing the nations together. And yet in the face of all these motives to peace, we have made light of the present danger. How few of us seem to have felt the infinite interests, which a war would put in jeopardy? Many have talked of national honor, as duellists talk of their reputation; a few have used language worthy of a mob making a ring to see a fight. Hardly any where has a tone worthy of the solemnity of the subject been uttered. National honor! This has been on our lips; as if the true honor of a nation did not consist in earnest, patient efforts for peace, not only for its own sake, but for the sake of humanity; as if this great country, after a long history which has borne witness to its prowess, needed to rush to battle to prove itself no coward! Are we still in the infancy of civilization? Has Christianity no power over us? Can a people never learn the magnanimity

of sacrifices to peace and humanity? I am indeed aware, that the vast majority of the community would shrink from this war, were it to come nearer. But had we feelings and principles worthy of men and Christians, should we wait for the evil to stand at our door, before waking up to the use of every means for averting it?

A great addition to the painfulness of our situation, is found in the manner, in which we have been forced into it. One State out of the twenty-six has by its rashness exposed us to the greatest calamities. Maine, by sending an armed force, without warning, into the disputed territory, necessarily awakened in the neighboring British Province an alarm, which would have been wholly prevented by friendly consultation with its Governor; and in the next place, this State, by declining or neglecting to acquiesce in the arrangement of the national executive with the British minister, virtually took our foreign relations into her own hands, and assumed a power more dangerous to the peace of the country, than any other which can be imagined. We have heard of the "rights" of a State to nullify the laws of Congress, and to secede from the Union. But to some of us, these are less formidable than the "right" of each State to involve us in a foreign war. The assumption of such a power is a flagrant violation of the fundamental principle, and a rejection of one of the chief benefits, of the confederacy. Better surrender to an enemy many disputed territories, than cede this right to a State. Ill-starred indeed must be this Union, if any one of its members may commit all the rest to hostilities. The general government has at this moment a solemn duty to discharge, one requiring the calm, invincible, firmness of Washington, or the

iron-will of the late President of the United States. It must not, by a suicidal weakness, surrender the management of our foreign relations to a single State.

And here I am bound to express my gratitude to the present Chief Magistrate of the Union, for his temperate and wise efforts for the preservation of peace. He will feel, I trust, that there is a truer glory in saving a country from war, than in winning a hundred battles. Much also is due to the beneficent influence of General Scott. To this distinguished man belongs the rare honor of uniting with military energy and daring, the spirit of a philanthropist. His exploits in the field, which placed him in the first rank of our soldiers, have been obscured by the purer and more lasting glory of a Pacificator, and of a Friend of Mankind. In the whole history of the intercourse of civilized with barbarous or half civilized communities, we doubt, whether a brighter page can be found, than that which records his agency in the removal of the Cherokees. As far as the wrongs done to this race can be atoned for, General Scott has made the expiation. In his recent mission to the disturbed borders of our country, he has succeeded, not so much by policy, as by the nobleness and generosity of his character, by moral influences, by the earnest conviction with which he has enforced on all, with whom he had to do, the obligations of patriotism, justice, humanity, and religion. It would not be easy to find among us a man, who has won a purer fame; and I am happy to offer this tribute, because I would do something, no matter how little, to hasten the time, when the spirit of Christian humanity shall be accounted an essential attribute and the brightest ornament in a public man.

I close this preface with a topic, which ought not to be set aside as an unmeaning common-place. We have Christians among us not a few. Have they been true to themselves and their religion in the present agitation of the question of war? Have they spoken with strength and decision? Have they said, We will take no part in a rash, passionate, unnecessary war? Or have they sat still, and left the country to parties and politicians? Will they always consent to be the passive tools of the ambitious or designing? Is the time never to come, when they will plant themselves on their religion, and resolve not to stir an inch, in obedience to the policy or legislation of the men of this world? On this topic I have enlarged in the following discourse, and I respectfully ask for it the impartial attention of Christians.

LECTURE ON WAR.

IN commencing this lecture on War, my thoughts are irresistibly drawn to that exemplary servant of God, the late NOAH WORCESTER, through whose labors, more than through any other cause, the attention of the community has been awakened to the guilt and misery of war. I feel my own obligation to him in this particular. In truth it was not easy to know him, and to escape wholly the influence of his character. So imbued was he with the spirit of peace, that it spread itself around him like the fragrance of sweet flowers. Even those within his sphere, who listened at first with distrust or with a feeling approaching opposition, were not seldom overcome by the singular union in his conversation of gentleness, earnestness and serene wisdom. He did not live in vain. One of my motives for taking part in this

course of lectures, is my respect for this venerated man. Another and a stronger motive, is the fact, that, notwithstanding the favorable impression made by his efforts, there is yet comparatively little interest in the subject of peace. It is a reason for setting forth great truths, that sceptics deride them, and the multitude pass them by with unconcern. Dr. Worcester was not roused by the shouts of a crowd to lift up his voice in behalf of peace. He did not postpone his testimony to "a more convenient season." He was as "one crying in the wilderness." He began his ministry amidst the triumphs of the spirit of war. He took counsel not of men, but of the divine oracle in his own breast. The truth, which was burning as a fire within him, he could not but give forth. He had faith in it. He had faith in God its inspirer. So ought we to trust. So ought we to bear a more fervent witness to truth, on the very ground that it is unpopular, neglected, despised.

In the following lecture, I shall aim to set forth the Chief Evil of war, to set forth its great Remedy, and then to point out some of the Causes of the faint impression made by its woes and crimes.

Before entering on these topics, I would offer one or two remarks. In speaking as I propose to do of the evils of war, I have no thought of denying, that war has sometimes done good. There is no unmixed evil in the

universe. Providence brings good from every thing from fearful sufferings, from atrocious crimes. But sufferings and crimes are not therefore to be set down among our blessings. Murder sometimes cuts short the life and triumphs of a monster of guilt. Robbery may throw into circulation the useless hoards of a miser. Despotism may subdue an all-wasting anarchy. But we do not, therefore, canonize despotism, robbery, and murder. In fierce ages, when common life is made up of violence and borders on bloodshed, when piracy is an honorable trade, and a stranger is a foe, war, by accumulating force in the hands of an able chieftain, may gather many petty tribes under one iron will, and thus a State may be founded, and its rude organization may prove a germ of social order. In later times, war may carry into less civilized regions the influences, knowledge, arts, and religion of more cultivated nations. Above all, war may call forth in those whom it assails, an indignant patriotism, a fervent public spirit, a generous daring, and heroic sacrifices, which testify to the inborn greatness of human nature; just as great vices, by the horror with which they thrill us, and by the reaction they awaken, often give strength to the moral sentiments of a community. These, however, are the incidental influences of war. Its necessary fruits are crime and wo. To enthrone force above right, is its essential character; and order, freedom, civilization, are its natural prey. Besides, the benefits of war, such as they are, belong to unrefined

ages, when the passions, if not expended in public conflicts, would break out in worse forms of rapine and lust, and when one nation can act on another only by violence. Society, in its present stage, stands in need of war no more than of the ordeal, the rack, the inquisition, the baronial license of the middle ages. All these monuments and ministers of barbarism should be buried in one grave.

I. I now proceed to consider, first, as I proposed, the chief evil of war. The chief evil of war! What is it? What induces us to place war at the head of human calamities? In replying to these questions, I shall not direct you to the physical sufferings of war, however great or terrible. Death in its most agonizing forms; the overthrow of proud cities; the devastation of fruitful fields; the impoverishing of nations; famine; pestilence; these form the train of victorious war. But these are not the distinguishing evils of war. These are inflictions of other causes much more than of war. Other causes are wasting human life and joy more than battles. Millions indeed die by the sword; but these millions are as nothing, compared with the countless multitudes who die by slow and painful disease. Cities are overthrown by earthquakes as well as by armies, and more frequently swept by accidental conflagrations than by the flames of war. Hostile bands ravage the fields; but how much oftener do whirlwinds, storms, hurri-

canes rush over land and sea, prostrating harvests, and destroying the labors of years on a scale so vast, as to reduce human devastations to a narrow extent. The truth is, that man is surrounded with mighty powers of nature which he cannot comprehend or withstand; and, amidst their beneficent operations, all of them inflict much suffering. What distinguishes war is, not that man is slain, but that he is slain, spoiled, crushed by the cruelty, the injustice, the treachery, the murderous hand of man. The evil is Moral evil. War is the concentration of all human crimes. Here is its distinguishing, accursed brand. Under its standard gather violence, malignity, rage, fraud, perfidy, rapacity, and lust. If it only slew man, it would do little. It turns man into a beast of prey. Here is the evil of war, that man, made to be the brother, becomes the deadly foe of his kind; that man, whose duty it is to mitigate suffering, makes the infliction of suffering his study and end; that man, whose office it is to avert and heal the wounds which come from nature's powers, makes researches into nature's laws, and arms himself with her most awful forces, that he may become the destroyer of his race. Nor is this all. There is also found in war a cold-hearted indifference to human miseries and wrongs, perhaps more shocking than the bad passions it calls forth. To my mind, this contempt of human nature is singularly offensive. To hate, expresses something like respect. But in war, man treats his brother as nothing worth; sweeps away

human multitudes as insects ; tramples them down as grass ; mocks at their rights ; and does not deign a thought to their woes.

These remarks shew us the great evil of war. It is moral evil. The field of battle is a theatre, got up at immense cost, for the exhibition of crime on a grand scale. There the hell within the human breast blazes out fiercely and without disguise. A more fearful hell in any region of the universe cannot well be conceived. There the fiends hold their revels and spread their fury.

To many, the physical evils of war are more striking than moral. The outward impresses multitudes more than the inward. It is because they cannot look inward, because they are too earthly and sensual to see and comprehend the deformity of a selfish, unjust, malignant soul. The outward evils of life are emblems of the inward, and are light when severed from these. The saddest view of war is, that it is the breaking out of the human heart, revealing there what is more awful than the miseries which it inflicts. The death-groan is fearful ; but how much more appalling the spirit of murder which extorts it.

Suppose two multitudes of men, each composed of thousands, meeting from different countries, but meeting not to destroy but to consult and labor for the good of

the race ; and suppose them, in the midst of their deliberations, to be smitten suddenly by some mysterious visitation of God, and their labors to be terminated by immediate death. We should be awe-struck by this strange, sudden, wide-spread ruin. But reflection would teach us, that this simultaneous extinction of life in so many of our race was but an anticipation or peculiar fulfilment of the sentence passed on all mankind ; and a tender reverence would spring up, as we should think of so many generous men coming together from so many different regions, in the spirit of human brotherhood, to be wrapt in one pall, to sleep in one grave. We should erect a monument on the solemn spot ; but chiefly to commemorate the holy purpose, which had gathered them from their scattered abodes ; and we should write on it, "To the memory of a glorious company, suddenly taken from God's ministry on earth, to enter again, (a blessed brotherhood,) on a higher ministry in heaven." Here you have death sweeping away hosts in a moment. But how different from death in a field of battle, where man meets man as a foe, where the countenance flashes rage and the arm is nerved for slaughter, where brother hews down brother, and where thousands are sent unprepared, in the moment of crime, to give their account. When nature's laws, fulfilling the mysterious will of God, inflict death on the good, we bow, we adore, we give thanks. How different is death from the murderous hand of man !

Allow me to make another supposition, which may bring out still more strongly the truth on which I now insist, that the great evil of war is inward, moral ; that its physical woes, terrible as they may be, are light by the side of this. Suppose then, that in travelling through a solitary region, you should catch the glimpse of a distant dwelling. You approach it eagerly in the hope of hearing a welcome after your weary journey. As you draw nigh, an ominous stillness damps your hope ; and on entering, you see the inmates of the house, a numerous family, stretched out motionless and without life. A wasting pestilence has, in one day, made their dwelling a common tomb. At first you are thrilled with horror by the sight ; but as you survey the silent forms, you see on all their countenances, amidst traces of suffering, an expression of benignity. You see some of the dead lying side by side, with hands mutually entwined, shewing that the last action of life was a grasp of affection ; whilst some lie locked in one another's arms. The mother's cold lips are still pressed to the cheek of the child, and the child's arms still wind round the neck of the mother. In the forms of others, you see no ambiguous proof, that the spirit took its flight in the act of prayer. As you look on these signs of love and faith stronger than the last agony, what a new feeling steals over you ! Your horror subsides. Your eyes are suffused with tears, not of anguish, but of sympathy, affection, tender reverence. You feel the spot to be consecrated.

Death becomes lovely like the sleep of infancy. You say, Blessed family, Death hath not divided you !

With soothed and respectful sorrow, you leave this resting place of the good, and another dwelling, dimly descried in the horizon, invites your steps. As you approach it, the same stillness is an augury of a like desolation, and you enter it, expecting to see another family laid low by the same mysterious disease. But you open the door, and the spectacle freezes your blood, and chains your steps to the threshold. On every face you see the distortion of rage. Every man's hand grasps a deadly weapon ; every breast is gored with wounds. Here lies one, rived asunder by a sword. There, two are locked together, but in the death-grapple of hatred, not the embrace of love. Here lies woman, trampled on and polluted, and there the child, weltering in his own blood. You recoil with horror, as soon as the sickness of the heart will suffer you to move. The deadly steam of the apartment oppresses, overpowers you, as if it were the suffocating air of hell. You are terror-struck, as if through the opening earth you had sunk into the abode of fiends ; and when the time for reflection comes, and you recal the blessed habitation you had just before left, what a conviction rushes on you, that nothing deserves the name of woe, but that which crime inflicts. You feel, that there is a sweetness, loveliness, sacredness in suffering and death, when these are per-

vaded by holy affections ; and that infinite wretchedness and despair gather over these, when springing from unholy passion, when bearing the brand of crime.

In these remarks, I do not mean to deny, that the physical sufferings of war are great, and should incite us to labor for its abolition. But sufferings, separate from crime, coming not through man's wickedness, but from the laws of nature, are not unmixed evils. They have a ministry of love. God has ordained them, that they should bind men to one another, that they should touch and soften the human heart, that they should call forth mutual aid, solace, gratitude, and self-forgetting love. Sorrow is the chief cement of souls. Death, coming in the order of nature, gathers round the sufferer sympathizing, anxious friends, who watch day and night, with suffused eyes and heart-breathed prayer, to avert or mitigate the last agonies. It calls up tender recollections, inspires solemn thought, rebukes human pride, obscures the world's glories, and speaks of immortality. From the still death-bed, what softening, subduing, chastening, exalting influences proceed. But death in war, death from the hand of man, sears the heart and conscience, kills human sympathies, and scatters the thought of judgment to come. Man dying in battle, unsolaced, unpitied, and a victim to hatred, rapacity, and insatiable ambition, leaves behind him wrongs to be revenged. His blood does not speak peace or speak of heaven ; but

sends forth a maddening cry, and exasperates survivors to new struggles.

Thus war adds to suffering the unutterable weight of crime, and defeats the holy and blessed ministry which all suffering is intended to fulfil. When I look back on the ages of conflict through which the race has passed, what most moves me is not the awful amount of suffering which war has inflicted. This may be borne. The terrible thought is, that this has been the work of crime; that men, whose great law is love, have been one another's butchers; that God's children have stained his beautiful earth, made beautiful for their home, with one another's blood; that the shriek, which comes to us from all regions and ages, has been extorted by human cruelty; that man has been a demon, and has turned earth into hell. All else may be borne. It is this which makes history so horrible a record to the benevolent mind.

II. I have now set before you what I deem the chief evil of war. It is moral evil. And from these views you will easily judge, what I regard as the true remedy of war, as the means of removing it, which above all others we should employ. If the most terrible view of war be, that it is the triumph and jubilee of selfish and malignant passions, then its true cure is to be sought in the diffusion of the principles of Universal Justice and Love, in that spirit of Jesus Christ, which expels the de-

mons of selfishness and malignity from the heart. Even supposing, that war could be abolished by processes which leave the human character unchanged, that it could be terminated by the progress of a civilization, which, whilst softening manners, would not diminish the selfishness, mercenariness, hard-heartedness, fraud, ambition of men, its worst evils would still remain, and society would reap in some other forms the fruits of its guilt. God has ordained, that the wickedness within us shall always find its expression and punishment in outward evil. War is nothing more than a reflection or image of the soul. It is the fiend within coming out. Human history is nothing more, than the inward nature manifested in its native acts and issues. Let the soul continue unchanged ; and, should war cease, the inward plague would still find its way to the surface. The infernal fire at the centre of our being, though it should not break forth in the wasting volcano, would not slumber, but by other eruptions, more insensible yet not less deadly, would lay waste human happiness. I do not believe however, that any remedy but the Christian spirit can avail against war. The wild beast, that has gorged on millions of victims in every age, is not to be tamed by a polished or selfish civilization. Selfishness, however drilled into courtesy, always tends to strife. Man, as long as possessed by it, will sacrifice others to his own interest and glory, and will grow angry and fierce when others stand in his way.

War will never yield but to the principles of universal justice and love, and these have no sure root but in the religion of Jesus Christ. Christianity is the true remedy for war, not Christianity in name, not such Christianity as we see, not such as has grown up under arbitrary governments in church and state, not such as characterizes any Christian sect at the present day, but Christianity as it lived in the soul and came forth in the life of its founder; a religion, that reveals man as the object of God's infinite love, and which commends him to the unbounded love of his brethren; a religion, the essence of which is self-denial, self-sacrifice, in the cause of human nature; a religion, which proscribes, as among the worst sins, the passion of man for rule and dominion over his fellow-creatures; which knows nothing of rich or poor, high or low, bond or free, and casts down all the walls of partition which sever men from one another's sympathy and respect.

Christian love alone can supplant war; and this love is not a mere emotion, a tenderness awakened by human suffering, but an intelligent, moral, spiritual love, a perception and deep feeling of the sacredness of human nature, a recognition of the inalienable rights, the solemn claims of every human being. It protests fearlessly against all wrong, no matter how obscure the victim. It desires to lift up each and all, no matter how fallen. It is a sympathy with the spiritual principle dwelling under

every human form. This is the love which is to conquer war; and as yet this has been but little diffused. The Quakers indeed have protested against war as unchristian, but have done little towards bringing into clear light, and sending forth with new power, the spirit to which war is to yield. Cutting themselves off by outward peculiarities from the community, secluding themselves from ordinary intercourse through fear of moral infection, living almost as a separate race, they have been little felt in society; they have done little to awaken that deep religious interest in man as man, that sensibility to his rights, that hatred of all wrong, that thirst for the elevation of every human being, in which Christian love finds its truest manifestation. Every sect has as yet been too imbued with the spirit of sects, and has inherited too largely the exclusiveness of past ages, to understand or spread the true spirit of human brotherhood. The love which Christ breathes, which looks through man's body to the immortal spirit, which sees something divine in the rational and moral powers of the lowest human being, and which challenges for the lowest, the sympathy, respect, and fostering aid of his race; this has been rare, and yet it is only by the gradual diffusion of this, that the plague of war can be stayed. This reverence for humanity, could it even prevail through a narrow sphere, could it bind together but a small body of men, would send forth a testimony against war, which would break the slumber of the

Christian world, and which would strike awe into many a contemner of his race.

I am aware, that others are hoping for the abolition of war by other causes ; and other causes, I am aware, must be brought into action. I only say, that, unless joined with the spirit of Christianity, they give no assurance of continued repose. This thought I would briefly illustrate.

The present unusual cessation of arms in the Christian world, is to some, a promise of a happier era in human affairs. It is indeed a cheering fact, and may well surprise us, when we consider how many causes of war have been in action, how many threatening clouds have overcast the political sky, during the pause of war. But if we examine the causes of this tranquillity, we shall learn not to confide in it too strongly.

The first cause was the exhaustion in which Europe was left by the bloody conflicts of the French Revolution. The nations, worn out with struggles, wasted by successive invasions, and staggering under an unprecedented load of debt, yearned for repose. The strong man had bled too freely to fight more. For years poverty has kept the peace in Europe. One of the fruits of civilization is the increasing expensiveness of war, so that when the voice of humanity cannot be heard, the hollow sound of an empty treasury is a warning, which

cannot be slighted. This cause of peace is evidently temporary. Nations, resting from exhaustion, may be expected to renew their pernicious activity, when their strength is renewed.

Another cause of the continuance of peace is undoubtedly the extension of new and profitable relations through the civilized world. Since the pacification of Europe, in 1816, a new impulse has been given to industry. The discoveries of science have been applied with wonderful success to the useful arts. Nations have begun in earnest to develop their resources. Labor is discovered to be the grand conqueror, enriching and building up nations more surely than the proudest battles. As a necessary result of this new impulse, commerce has been wonderfully enlarged. Nations send the products of their soil and machinery, where once they sent armies; and such a web of common interests has been woven, that hostilities can spring up in no corner of the civilized world, without deranging in a measure the order and industry of every other state. Undoubtedly we have here a promise of peace; but let us not be too sanguine. We have just begun this career, and we know not its end. Let wealth grow without a corresponding growth of the temperate, just, and benevolent spirit of Christianity, and I see few auguries but of evil. Wealth breeds power, and power always tempts to wrong. Communities, which at once grow rich and

licentious, breed desperate men, unprincipled adventurers, restless spirits, who unsettle social order at home, who make freedom a cloak and instrument of ambition, and find an interest in embroiling their country with foreign foes. Another consequence of growing prosperity, is the rapid growth of population; and this, in the absence of Christian restraints and Christian principles, tends to pauperism and crime, tends to make men cheap, and to destroy the sacredness of human life; and communities are tempted to throw off this dangerous load, this excess of numbers, in foreign war. In truth, the vices, which fester in the bosom of a prosperous, licentious, over-peopled state, are hardly less fearful than those of war, and they naturally seek and find their punishment in this awful calamity. Let us not speak of industry, commerce, and wealth as ensuring peace. Is commerce never jealous and grasping? Have commercial states no collisions? Have commercial rights never drawn the sword in self-defence? Are not such states a tempting prey? And have they no desire to prey on others? Does trade cherish nothing analogous to the spirit of war in ordinary pursuits? Is there no fighting on the exchange? Is bargaining nothing but friendship and peace? Why then expect from trade alone peace among nations. Nothing, nothing can bind nations together but Christian justice and love. I insist on this the more earnestly, because it is the fashion now to trust for every good to commerce, industry, and the wonderful inven-

tions, which promise indefinite increase of wealth. But to improve man's outward condition, is not to improve man himself, and this is the sole ground of hope. With all our ingenuity, we can frame no machinery for manufacturing wisdom, virtue, peace. Rail-roads and steam-boats cannot speed the soul to its perfection. This must come, if it come at all, from each man's action on himself, from putting forth our power on the soul and not over nature, from a sense of inward not outward miseries, from "hunger and thirst after righteousness," not after wealth. I should rejoice like the prophet "to bring glad tidings, to publish peace." But I do fear, that without some great spiritual revolution, without some new life and love breathed into the church, without some deep social reforms, men will turn against each other their new accumulations of power; that their wealth and boasted inventions will be converted into weapons of destruction; that the growing prosperity of nations will become the nutriment of more wasteful wars, will become fuel for more devouring fires of ambition or revenge.

Another cause of the recent long cessation of foreign wars, has been the dread of internal convulsions, of civil wars. The spirit of revolution has, more or less, penetrated the whole civilized world. The grand idea of Human Rights has found its way even into despotisms. Kings have less confidence in their subjects and soldiers. They have felt their thrones totter, and have felt that

a disastrous war would expose them to a force more terrible than that of victorious foes, the force of burning discontent, exasperated opinion at home. It is understood, that the next general war will be a war not of nations but of principles, that absolutism must measure swords with liberalism, despotism with free constitutions; and from this terrible encounter both parties recoil. We indeed believe, that, with or without war, liberal principles and institutions are destined to advance, to make the conquest of Europe; and it is thought, that these, being recognitions of human rights, will be less prodigal of human blood than absolute power. But can we hope, that these, unsanctioned, unsustained by the Christian spirit, will ensure peace? What teaches our own experience? Because free, have we no wars? What indeed is the free spirit of which we so much boast? Is it not much more a jealousy of our own rights, than a reverence for the rights of all? Does it not consist with the inflictions of gross wrongs? Does it not spoil the Indian? Does it not enslave the African? Is it not anxious to spread bondage over new regions? Who can look on this free country, distracted by parties, rent by local jealousies, in some districts administering justice by mobs and silencing speech and the press by conflagration and bloodshed, who can see this free country, and say, that liberal opinions and institutions are of themselves to banish war? Nowhere are the just, impartial, disinter-

ested principles of Christianity so much needed as in a free state. Nowhere are there more elements of strife to be composed, more passions to be curbed, more threatened wrongs to be repressed. Freedom has its perils as well as inestimable blessings. In loosening outward restraints, it demands that justice and love be enthroned within man's soul. Without Christian principle, freedom may swell the tide of tumults and war.

One other cause will probably be assigned by some, for the long cessation of hostilities in the civilized world ; and that is, the greater success of statesmen in securing that long sought good among nations, the balance of power. Be it so. But how soon may this balance be disturbed? How does it tremble now? Europe has long been threatened by the disproportionate growth of Russia. In the north of Europe is silently growing up a power, which, many fear, is one day to grasp at universal empire. The south, it is said, is to fulfil its old destiny, that is, to fall a prey to the north. All Europe is interested in setting bounds to this half-civilized despotism. But the great absolute powers, Prussia and Austria, dreading more the progress of liberal opinions than of Russian hordes, may rather throw themselves into her scale, and be found fighting with her the battles of legitimacy against free institutions. It is true, that many wise men dismiss these fears as vain, and believe, that the ill-cemented union of the provinces or rather

nations, which compose the colossal empire of the north, cannot endure, or at least will admit no steady prosecution of schemes of domination. I presume not to read the future. My single object is, to shew the uncertainty of all means of abolishing war, unless joined with and governed by the spreading spirit of our disinterested faith. No calculations of interest, no schemes of policy can do the work of love, of the spirit of human brotherhood. There can be no peace without, but through peace within. Society must be an expression of the souls of its members. Man's character moulds his outward lot. His destiny is woven by the good or evil principles which bear rule in his breast. I indeed attach importance to all the causes of peace which I have now stated. They are far from powerless; but their power will be spent in vain unless aided by mightier and diviner energy, by the force of moral and religious principles, the strength of disinterested love.

III. I have now considered the great evil of war, and the great remedy of this scourge of nations, and I now proceed, as proposed, to point out some causes of that insensibility to its evils, so common in the world, and so common even among those from whom better things might be hoped; and this I do, not to gratify a love of speculation, but in the belief, that this insensibility will be resisted and overcome, in proportion as its sources shall be explained.

Among its chief causes, one undoubtedly is the commonness of war. This hardens us to its evils. Its horrors are too familiar to move us, unless they start up at our own door. How much more would they appal us, were they rare? If the history of the race were, with one solitary exception, a history of peace, concord, brotherly love; if but one battle had been fought in the long succession of ages; if from the bosom of profound tranquillity, two armies, on one fatal day, had sprung forth and rushed together for mutual destruction; if but one spot on earth had been drenched with human blood shed by human hands; how different would be our apprehensions of war! What a fearful interest would gather round that spot! How would it remain deserted, dreaded, abhorred! With what terrible distinctness would the leaders of those armies stand out as monsters, not men! How should we confound them with Moloch, and the fiercest fallen spirits! Should we not feel, as if, on that mysterious day, the blessed influences of Heaven had been intercepted, and a demoniacal frenzy had been let loose on the race? And has war, in becoming common, lost its horrors? Is it less terrible because its Molochs crowd every page of history, and its woes and crimes darken all nations and all times? Do base or ferocious passions less degrade and destroy, because their victims are unnumbered? If indeed, the evils of war were only physical, and were inevitable, we should do well to resign ourselves to that kindly power of habit,

which takes the edge from oft repeated pains. But moral evils, evils which may, and ought to be shunned, which have their spring in human will, which our higher powers are given us to overcome, these it is a crime unresistingly to endure. The frequency and strength of these are more urgent reasons for abhorring and withstanding them. Reflection should be summoned to resist the paralyzing power of habit. From principle we should cherish a deeper horror of war, because its "sword devours forever."

I proceed to a second cause of insensibility to the evils of war, and one of immense power. I refer to the common and almost universal belief, that the right of war belongs to civil government. Let us be just to human nature. The idea of "Right," has always mixed itself with war, and this has kept out of view the real character of most of the conflicts of nations. The sovereign, regarding the right of war as an essential attribute of sovereignty, has on this ground ascribed a legitimacy to all national hostilities, and has never dreamed that in most of his wars he was a murderer. So the subject has thought himself bound to obey his sovereign, and, on this ground, has acquitted himself of crime, has perhaps imputed to himself merit, in fighting and slaughtering for the defence of the most iniquitous claims. Here lies the delusion, which we should be the most anxious to remove. It is the legality, ascribed to

war on account its being waged by government, which produces insensibility to its horrors and crimes. When a notorious robber, seized by Alexander, asked the conqueror of the world, whether he was not a greater robber than himself, the spirit of the hero repelled the title with indignation. And why so? Had he not, without provocation and cause, spoiled cities and realms, whilst the robber had only plundered individuals and single dwellings? Had he not slaughtered ten thousand innocent fellow-creatures for one victim who had fallen under the robber's knife? And why then did the arch-robber disclaim the name, and seriously believe, that he could not justly be confounded with ruffians? Because he was a King, the head of a state, and as such authorized to make war. Here was the shelter for his conscience and his fame. Had the robber, after addressing his question to Alexander, turned to the Macedonian soldier, and said to him, "Are you not too, a greater robber than I? Have not your hands been busier in pillage? Are they not died more deeply in innocent blood?" The unconscious soldier, like his master, would have repelled the title; and why? "I am a subject," he would have replied, "and bound to obey my sovereign; and, in fulfilling a duty, I cannot be sunk to the level of the most hated criminal." Thus king and subject take refuge in the right of war which inheres in sovereignty, and thus the most terrible crimes are perpetrated with little reproach.

I need not tell you, that there are Christians, who, to strip war of this pretext or extenuation, deny that this right exists; who teach, that Jesus Christ has wrested the sword from the magistrate as truly as from the private man. On this point, I shall not now enter. I believe, that more good may be done, in the present instance, by allowing to government the right of war. I still maintain, that most wars bring the guilt of murder on the government by whom they are declared, and on the soldier by whom they are carried on, so that our sensibility ought in no degree to be impaired by the supposed legitimacy of national hostilities.

I will allow, that government has the right of war. But a right has bounds, and when these are transgressed by us, it ceases to exist; and we are as culpable, as if it had never existed. The private citizen, it is generally acknowledged, has the right of taking life in self-defence; but if, under plea of this right, he should take life without cause, he would not stand absolved of murder. In like manner, though government be authorized to make war in self-defence, it still contracts the guilt of murder, if it proclaim war from policy, ambition, or revenge. By the Constitution of this country, various rights are conferred on Congress, for the public good; and should they extend these rights beyond the limits prescribed by the national charter, for purposes of cruelty, rapacity, and arbitrary power, they would be as treacherous, as crim-

inal, as if they had laid claim to unconceded rights. Now stricter bounds are set to the right of war, than those which the Constitution has prescribed to the rulers. A higher authority than man's defines this terrible prerogative. Wo ! Wo to him, who impatiently, selfishly, spurns the restraints of God, and who winks out of sight the crime of sending forth the sword to destroy, because, as a sovereign, he has the right of war.

From its very nature, this right should be exercised above all others anxiously, deliberately, fearfully. It is the right of passing sentence of death on thousands of our fellow-creatures. If any action on earth ought to be performed with trembling, with deep prostration before God, with the most solemn inquisition into motives, with the most reverent consultation of conscience, it is a declaration of war. This stands alone among acts of legislation. It has no parallel. These few words, "Let war be," have the power of desolation which belongs to earthquakes and lightnings ; they may stain the remotest seas with blood ; may wake the echoes of another hemisphere with the thunders of artillery ; may carry anguish into a thousand human abodes. No scheme of aggrandizement, no doubtful claims, no uncertain fears, no anxiety to establish a balance of power, will justify this act. It can find no justification but in plain, stern necessity, in unquestionable justice, in persevering wrongs, which all other-and long tried means have failed to avert.

Terrible is the responsibility, beyond that of all others, which falls on him who involves nations in war. He has no excuse for rashness, passion, or private ends. He ought at such a moment to forget, to annihilate himself. The spirit of God and justice, should alone speak and act through him. To commit this act rashly, passionately, selfishly, is to bring on himself the damnation of a thousand murders. An act of legislation, commanding fifty thousand men to be assembled on yonder common, there to be shot, stabbed, trampled under horses' feet, until their shrieks and agonies should end in death, would thrill us with horror ; and such an act is a declaration of war ; and a government which can perform it, without the most solemn sense of responsibility and the clearest admonitions of duty, deserves, in expiation of its crime, to endure the whole amount of torture which it has inflicted on its fellow-creatures.

I have said, a declaration of war stands alone. There is one act which approaches it, and which indeed is the very precedent on which it is founded. I refer to the signing of a death-warrant by a chief magistrate. In this case, how anxious is society, that the guilty only should suffer. The offender is first tried by his peers, and allowed the benefit of skilful counsel. The laws are expounded, and the evidence weighed, by learned and upright judges ; and when, after these protections of innocence, the unhappy man is convicted, he is still

allowed to appeal for mercy to the highest authority of the State, and to enforce his own cry by solicitations of friends and the people ; and when all means of averting his doom fail, religion, through her ministers, enters his cell, to do what yet can be done for human nature in its most fallen, miserable state. Society does not cast from its bosom its most unworthy member, without reluctance, without grief, without fear of doing wrong, without care for his happiness. But wars, by which thousands of the unoffending and worthiest perish, are continually proclaimed by rulers in madness, through ambition, through infernal policy, from motives which should rank them with the captains of pirate-ships, or leaders of banditti.

It is time that the right of war should not shield governments from the infamy due to hostilities, to which selfish wicked passions give birth. Let rulers learn, that for this right, they are held to a fearful responsibility. Let a war, not founded in plain justice and necessity, never be named but as Murder. Let the Christian give articulate voice to the blood, that cries from the earth against rulers by whom it has been criminally shed. Let no soft terms be used. On this subject, a new moral sense, and a new language are needed throughout the whole civilized and Christian world ; and just in proportion as the truth shall find a tone, war will cease.

But the right of war, which is said to belong to sovereignty, not only keeps out of sight the enormous guilt of rulers, in almost all national conflicts. It also hides or extenuates the frequent guilt of subjects in taking part in the hostilities, which their rulers declare. In this way, much of the prevalent insensibility to the evils of war is induced, and perhaps on no point is light more needed. The ferocity and cruelty of armies impress us little, because we look on them as doing a work of duty. The subject or citizen, as we think, is bound to obey his rulers. In his worst deeds as a soldier, he is discharging his obligations to the State, and thus murder and pillage, covered with a cloak of duty, excite no deep, unaffected reprobation and horror.

I know it will be asked, "And is not the citizen bound to fight at the call of his government? Does not his commission absolve him from the charge of murder or enormous crime? Is not obedience to the sovereign power the very foundation on which society rests?" I answer, "Has the duty of obeying government no bounds? Is the human sovereign a God? Is his sovereignty absolute? If he command you to slay a parent, must you obey? If he forbid you to worship God, must you obey? Have you no right to judge his acts? Have you no self-direction? Is there no unchangeable right which the ruler cannot touch? Is there no higher standard than human law?" These questions answer them-

selves. A declaration of war cannot sanction wrong, or turn murder into a virtuous deed. Undoubtedly, as a general rule, the citizen is bound to obey the authorities under which he lives. No difference of opinion as to the mere expediency of measures, will warrant opposition. Even in cases of doubtful right he may submit his judgment to the law. But when called to do what his conscience clearly pronounces wrong, he must not waver. No outward law is so sacred as the voice of God in his own breast. He cannot devolve on rulers an act so solemn, as the destruction of fellow-beings convicted of offence. For no act will more solemn inquisition be made at the bar of God.

I maintain, that the citizen, before fighting, is bound to inquire into the justice of the cause which he is called to maintain with blood, and bound to withhold his hand, if his conscience condemn the cause. On this point he is able to judge. No political question, indeed, can be determined so easily as this of war. War can be justified only by plain, palpable necessity; by unquestionable wrongs, which, as patient trial has proved, can in no other way be redressed; by the obstinate, persevering invasion of solemn and unquestionable rights. The justice of war is not a mystery for cabinets to solve. It is not a state-secret which we must take on trust. It lies within our reach. We are bound to examine it.

We are especially bound to this examination, because there is always a presumption against the justice of war ; always reason to fear, that it is condemned by impartial conscience and God. This solemn truth has peculiar claims on attention. It takes away the plea, that we may innocently fight, because our rulers have decreed war. It strips off the most specious disguise from the horrors and crimes of national hostilities. If hostilities were, as a general rule, necessary and just, if an unjust war were a solitary exception, then the citizen might extenuate his share in the atrocities of military life, by urging his obligation to the state. But if there is always reason to apprehend the existence of wrong on the part of rulers, then he is bound to pause and ponder well his path. Then he advances at his peril, and must answer for the crimes of the unjust, unnecessary wars in which he shares.

The presumption is always against the justice and necessity of war. This we learn from the spirit of all rulers and nations towards foreign states. It is partial, unjust. Individuals may be disinterested ; but nations have no feeling of the tie of brotherhood to their race. A base selfishness is the principle, on which the affairs of nations are commonly conducted. A statesman is expected to take advantage of the weaknesses and wants of other countries. How loose a morality governs the intercourse of states ! What falsehoods and intrigues are

licensed by diplomacy! What nation regards another with true friendship? What nation makes sacrifices to another's good? What nation is as anxious to perform its duties, as to assert its rights? What nation chooses to suffer wrong, rather than to inflict it? What nation lays down the everlasting law of right, casts itself fearlessly on its principles, and chooses to be poor or to perish rather than to do wrong? Can communities so selfish, so unfriendly, so unprincipled, so unjust, be expected to wage righteous wars? Especially if with this selfishness are joined national prejudices, antipathies, and exasperated passions, what else can be expected in the public policy but inhumanity and crime. An individual, we know, cannot be trusted in his own cause, to measure his own claims, to avenge his own wrongs; and the civil magistrate, an impartial umpire, has been substituted as the only means of justice. But nations are even more unfit than individuals to judge in their own cause; more prone to push their rights to excess, and to trample on the rights of others; because nations are crowds, and crowds are unawed by opinion, and more easily inflamed by sympathy into madness. Is there not then always a presumption against the justice of war?

This presumption is increased, when we consider the false notions of patriotism and honor which prevail in nations. Men think it a virtuous patriotism to throw a mantle, as they call it, over their country's infirmities, to

wink at her errors, to assert her most doubtful rights, to look jealously and angrily on the prosperity of rival states; and they place her honor not in unfaltering adherence to the right, but in a fiery spirit, in quick resentment, in martial courage, and especially in victory; and can a good man hold himself bound and stand prepared to engage in war at the dictate of such a state?

The citizen or subject, you say, may innocently fight at the call of his rulers; and I ask, who are his rulers? Perhaps an absolute sovereign, looking down on his people as another race, as created to toil for his pleasure, to fight for new provinces, to bleed for his renown. There are indeed republican governments. But were not the republics of antiquity as greedy of conquest, as prodigal of human life, as steeled against the cries of humanity, as any despots who ever lived? And if we come down to modern republics, are they to be trusted with our consciences? What does the Congress of these United States represent? Not so much the virtue of the country, as a vicious principle, the spirit of party. It acts not so much for the people as for parties; and are parties upright? Are parties merciful? Are the wars, to which party commits a country, generally just?

Unhappily, public men, under all governments, are, of all moral guides, the most unsafe, the last for a Christian

to follow. Public life is thought to absolve men from the strict obligations of truth and justice. To wrong an adverse party or another country is not reprobated, as are wrongs in private life. Thus duty is dethroned; thus the majesty of virtue insulted in the administration of nations. Public men are expected to think more of their own elevation than of their country. Is the city of Washington the most virtuous spot in this republic? Is it the school of incorruptible men? The hall of Congress, disgraced by so many brawls, swayed by local interest and party intrigues, in which the right of petition is trodden under foot, is this the oracle from which the responses of justice come forth? Public bodies want conscience. Men acting in masses shift off responsibility on one another. Multitudes never blush. If these things be true, then I maintain, that the Christian has not a right to take part in war blindly, confidingly, at the call of his rulers. To shed the blood of fellow-creatures is too solemn a work to be engaged in lightly. Let him not put himself, a tool, into wicked hands. Let him not meet on the field his brother man, his brother Christian, in a cause on which heaven frowns. Let him bear witness against unholy wars, as his country's greatest crimes. If called to take part in them, let him deliberately refuse. If martial law seize on him, let him submit. If hurried to prison, let him submit. If brought thence to be shot, let him submit. There must be martyrs to peace as truly as to other principles of our religion.

The first Christians chose to die, rather than obey the laws of the state which commanded them to renounce their Lord. "Death rather than crime," such is the good man's watchword ; such the Christian's vow. Let him be faithful unto death.

Undoubtedly it will be objected, that if one law of the state may in any way be resisted, then all may be, and so government must fall. This is precisely the argument, on which the doctrine of passive obedience to the worst tyrannies rests. The absolutist says, "if one government may be overturned, none can stand. Your right of revolution is nothing but the right of anarchy, of universal misrule." The reply is in both instances the same. Extreme cases speak for themselves. We must put confidence in the common sense of men, and suppose them capable of distinguishing between reasonable laws and those which require them to commit manifest crimes. The objection, which we are considering, rests on the supposition, that a declaration of war is a common act of legislation, bearing no strong marks of distinction from other laws, and consequently to be obeyed as implicitly as all. But it is broadly distinguished. A declaration of war sends us forth to destroy our fellow-creatures, to carry fire, sword, famine, bereavement, want, and woe into the fields and habitations of our brethren ; whilst Christianity, conscience, and all the pure affections of our nature call us to love our brethren, and to die, if

need be, for their good. And from whence comes this declaration of war? From men, who would rather die than engage in unjust or unnecessary conflict? Too probably, from men to whom Christianity is a name, whose highest law is honor, who are used to avenge their private wrongs and defend their reputations by shedding blood, and who, in public as in private life, defy the laws of God. Whoever, at such men's dictation, engages in war, without solemnly consulting conscience, and inquiring into the justice of the cause, contracts great guilt, nor can the "right of war," which such men claim as rulers, absolve him from the crimes and woes of the conflict in which he shares.

I have thus considered the second cause of the prevalent insensibility to war, namely, the common vague belief, that as the right of war inheres in government, therefore murder and pillage in national conflicts change their nature, or are broadly distinguished from the like crimes in common life. This topic has been so extended, that I must pass over many which remain, and can take but a glance at one or two which ought not to be wholly overlooked. I observe then, thirdly, that men's sensibility to the evil of war has been very much blunted by the deceptive show, the costume, the splendor in which war is arrayed. Its horrors are hidden under its dazzling dress. To the multitude, the senses are more convincing reasoners than the conscience. In youth, the period

which so often receives impressions for life, we cannot detect, in the heart-stirring fife and drum, the true music of war, the shriek of the newly wounded, or the faint moan of the dying. Arms glittering in the sunbeam do not remind us of bayonets dripping with blood. To one, who reflects, there is something very shocking in these decorations of war. If men must fight, let them wear the badges which become their craft. It would shock us to see a hangman dressed out in scarf and epaulette, and marching with merry music to the place of punishment. The soldier has a sadder work than the hangman. His office is not to despatch occasionally a single criminal; he goes to the slaughter of thousands as free from crime as himself. The sword is worn as an ornament; and yet its use is to pierce the heart of a fellow-creature. As well might the butcher parade before us his knife, or the executioner his axe or halter. Allow war to be necessary, still it is a horrible necessity, a work to fill a good man with anguish of spirit. Shall it be turned into an occasion of pomp and merriment? To dash out men's brains, to stab them to the heart, to cover the body with gashes, to lop off the limbs, to crush men under the hoof of the war-horse, to destroy husbands and fathers, to make widows and orphans, all this may be necessary; but to attire men for this work with fantastic trappings, to surround this fearful occupation with all the circumstances of gaiety and pomp, seems as barbarous, as it would be to deck a gallows, or to make a stage for danc-

ing beneath the scaffold. I conceive, that the military dress was not open to as much reproach in former times as now. It was then less dazzling, and acted less on the imagination, because it formed less an exception to the habits of the times. The dress of Europe not many centuries ago, was fashioned very much after what may be called the harlequin style. That is, it affected strong colors and strong contrasts. This taste belongs to rude ages, and has passed away very much with the progress of civilization. The military dress alone has escaped the reform. The military man is the only harlequin left us from ancient times. It is time, that his dazzling finery were gone, that it no longer corrupted the young, that it no longer threw a pernicious glare over his terrible vocation.

I close with assigning, what appears to me, to be the most powerful cause of the prevalent insensibility to war. It is our blindness to the dignity and claims of human nature. We know not the worth of a man. We know not, *who* the victims are, on whom war plants its foot, whom the conqueror leaves to the vulture on the field of battle, or carries captive to grace his triumph. Oh! did we know what men are, did we see in them the spiritual immortal children of God, what a voice should we lift against war! How indignantly, how sorrowfully should we invoke Heaven and earth to right our insulted, injured brethren!

I close with asking "Must the sword devour forever?" Must force, fear, pain always rule the world? Is the kingdom of God, the reign of truth, duty, and love, never to prevail? Must the sacred name of brethren be only a name among men? Must the divinity in man's nature never be recognised with veneration? Is the earth always to steam with human blood shed by man's hands, and to echo with groans wrung from hearts which violence has pierced? Can you and I, my friends, do nothing, nothing to impress a different character on the future history of our race? You say we are weak; and why weak? It is from inward defect, not from outward necessity. We are inefficient abroad, because faint within, faint in love, and trust and holy resolution. Inward power always comes forth, and works without. Noah Worcester, enfeebled in body, was not weak. George Fox, poor and uneducated, was not weak. They had light and life within, and therefore were strong abroad. Their spirits were stirred by Christ's truth and spirit, and, so moved, they spoke and were heard. We are dead and therefore cannot act. Perhaps we speak against war; but if we speak from tradition, if we echo what we hear, if peace be a cant on our lips, our words are unmeaning air. Our own souls must bleed when our brethren are slaughtered. We must feel the infinite wrong done to man by the brute force, which treads him in the dust. We must see in the authors of unjust, selfish, ambitious revengeful wars, monsters in human form, incarnations of the dread enemy

of the human race. Under the inspiration of such feelings, we shall speak, even the humblest of us, with something of prophetic force. This is the power, which is to strike awe into the counsellors and perpetrators of now licensed murder ; which is to wither the laurelled brow of now worshipped heroes. Deep moral convictions, unfeigned reverence and fervent love for man, and living faith in Christ, are mightier than armies ; mighty through God to the pulling down of the strong holds of oppression and war. Go forth, then, friends of mankind, peaceful soldiers of Christ ! and in your various relations, at home and abroad, in private life, and, if it may be, in more public spheres, give faithful utterance to the principles of universal justice and love, give utterance to your deep, solemn, irreconcilable hatred of the spirit of war.

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REPORTS OF LECTURES

DELIVERED AT THE CHAPEL IN SOUTH PLACE, FINSBURY.

By **W. J. FOX.**

Nos. XIV., XV., & XVI.

ON THE
PROGRESS AND CHARACTERISTICS
OF
CEREMONY.

ILLUSTRATED IN THE SERVICE PERFORMED, AND
SERMON PREACHED, ON OCCASION OF THE
CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY
QUEEN VICTORIA.

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LECTURE I.

THE festivities and splendours of the Coronation week may be regarded with at least comparative complacency. They were not, like the thanksgivings, and rejoicings, and illuminations which many of us remember, the commemoration of victories achieved with the wholesale destruction of human life; the celebration, by acts of debauchery, of the accomplishment of deeds of bloodshed; their character was generally as much raised above the grossness which formerly attended public festivities in this country, as their occasion was more innocent, peaceful, and becoming. A better spirit seems, by the advance of intelligence and the spread of just principles, to have been diffused throughout the numerous classes of the community, giving a more rational character to enjoyment, and elevating its nature and its influence, as the course of events in this instance has elevated its occasion. Nor was there, in these celebrations, anything of the spirit of faction, or of party assumption, or of class predominance, more than the very nature of the case required, and had rendered essential to its exhibition under present circumstances.

We may regard the event of the week as the fair expression of a general, of a national interest, in an individual, whose youth, and sex, and position command universal interest, and bid men's thoughts and feelings, their speculations and anticipations, flow in the same direction, and fix upon the same object. It is indeed a position which cannot but excite the anxious feelings, and concentrate the interests, of all reflective minds.

To a nation, to its external relations and internal interests, it may matter comparatively little whether the state and prerogatives and functions of royalty be vested in a mere child, or in the maturest age and the most expanded intelligence. When we consider what those powers and attributes are; when we see how much is, at least nominally, confided to an individual; the important questions of polity and of religion; of government, home and colonial; the direction of the streams of honour which flow from that fountain; of justice administered under that sanction; and the momentous question of peace or war, involving such a fearful amount of consequences for human enjoyment or suffering in its decision: we cannot but conceive that the powers of the ablest of our race, and those of the feeblest, must fall alike short; that the requisite mental and moral qualities almost partake of the characters of Providence and of Godhead; that there can be no security for their best direction in any attainments at which humanity is capable of arriving; and that, consequently, the prospects are as fair when the innocence of youth is placed on this lofty pinnacle, as when it is occupied by the statesman or philosopher. How this may bear on the wisdom of the institution, is another question. I speak of it now only in reference to the individual, and as one cause by which, in the present instance, the interest is deepened with which that individual must be generally regarded. Men look with anxiety, less on their own account than on hers, to the course which she is to hold and the prospects which

open before her; they devoutly exclaim, and may their exclamation be heard, "God speed her!"

If it be the will of a nation that its government should hold the monarchical form; if it resolve to concentrate such an amount of dignity, influence, and authority in a single individual, it cannot be unfitting that investiture with the office, the public investiture, should be an occasion of solemnity; that it should be surrounded with ceremonial; that religious associations also should be called in, in order to add to the impression. At the same time, it is not unreasonable to require, that if expressions be used, solemn expressions of devotion, they should be founded in truth; it is not unreasonable to require that if emblematic objects are to be used and actions to be performed, there should be meaning in those emblems and actions, a meaning consistent with the relative circumstances of the parties; a meaning consistent with the rights and privileges of humanity, or with those which are recognised as belonging to the citizens of the particular community whose first magistrate is thus inducted;—it is not unreasonable to require that in every portion of the forms that are employed, regard should be had to the state of opinion, of feeling, and of principle, to the past and the present condition, and to the future prospects, of the nation that thus honours an individual. But this is a difficult and delicate thing to accomplish. There is nothing that needs more continual adjustment than ceremony; than ceremony, especially, which claims to be religious. Opinion necessarily changes with the accumulation of knowledge, and therefore in a country possessing a press, and in some degree freedom, it changes with the mere lapse of time; and ceremony, to have meaning, and propriety, and power, must accommodate itself to the existing state of opinion at the time when it is employed. But ceremony is not only liable to be affected, by that becoming absurd at one time which was at a former period impressive, in consequence of the growth of opinion: it

is not only ever acted on by intelligence; but there is in ceremony itself a tendency to deterioration. Such is the course which it has always held, and of which traces abound in every portion of human history. Its annals are plainly written. The progress of ceremony may be chronicled like any series of events in natural history. It goes on in a course that may be marked out as easily and distinctly as the striking root of the acorn in the ground, its springing up, its growth into the oak, and putting forth branches and leaves, and flourishing for its appointed season, and then beginning to fade, decay, die, and rot into the earth from which it had so long been nourished. Where ceremony springs from the most innocent practices; where it has arisen from circumstances in themselves the most impressive and has been of the simplest description; it has yet shown this incapacity of remaining in the same relation to men's thoughts and opinions; it has almost uniformly become subject to a change in the way in which it was regarded, until what had been the purest and simplest devotion could only be considered as superstition. In such cases sometimes there is no remedy whatever but destruction, entire and total destruction; and an admirable example, though sound judgment be requisite in the imitator, was set for reformation by Hezekiah, King of Judah, when he demolished the brazen serpent. That serpent originally had been the occasion of deliverance to the Israelites from a fearful plague in the wilderness. It had been not merely an appropriate emblem, but the external agency itself by which that deliverance was effected. It very naturally became a prized relic, guarded with care and contemplated with reverence; and from this, by the various tendencies towards idolatry, so rife in that age and country, it grew into an object of worship, until the evil appeared so deeply seated in the public mind, that a patriotic and religious prince saw no remedy but demolishing, breaking into its native elements, this ancient relic held so sacred, and consecrated by the veneration of

successive ages. There is a striking instance of the tendency of ceremonial, of a simple and innocent kind originally, in the different changes undergone by what is termed the Sacrament, or the Lord's Supper. What was this at the outset? Christ and his chosen companions were celebrating the annual Jewish commemoration of the Passover; their social feast was finished; they had done their duty by the nation in commemorating the deliverance of their ancestors from Egyptian oppression; and then at the close of the feast and of the day, and of what might be regarded in all probability as their last meeting together, they did what every Jewish family was accustomed to do at that time, and what many are accustomed to do now—they passed round the family cup, the cup of parting benediction: they took one of the cakes of unleavened bread, made for the celebration of the Passover, and to which the Jews were at that time restricted, and they brake this amongst them, its original oneness being an emblem of their unity; its parting in their hands being a type of their connexion with each other in their own separate individualities; and being also referred by Christ to his own sacrifice, a sacrifice of so much nobler a nature than that which they were celebrating by means of the Paschal lamb. Nothing could be more natural, more innocent, more peculiarly social, more kind, and full of meaning which would reach every heart, than this simplest of actions. But in a very short time this was imitated by those who were very differently circumstanced; who were not bound by the ties of fraternal affection which subsisted between him and his apostles, though even among them there was a traitor; it became connected with stated acts of worship; it assumed what did not belong to it originally, the ceremonial of religious observance; being practised peculiarly by Christians, it became a badge of proselytism and of the new religion. As they were often obliged, when persecution commenced, to meet together in secret, in caves, or in darkened rooms, where only the light of the taper could shine upon their

proceedings, the kindling up of tapers became connected with this and other observances, to be performed in broad daylight when the Church gained its imperial establishment. One impression of ceremonial sanctity after another was added, until this bread and wine were supposed to be the viaticum of the departing spirit; until it was imagined there was in them a peculiar sacredness, which they might not partake of to whom other observances of Christianity were open. The priesthood interfered in order to arrogate to itself, and maintain, such distinctions as it ever seeks and cherishes from other portions of the community. The spiritual presence of Him who originally held this simple feast, was believed to be amongst them, and the notion of this presence was gradually made more substantial, more tangible, until the actual transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ was taught and believed; and thus one of the most simple forms that kindheartedness could suggest to the individual, with a party of friends or brethren around him for the last time in the world, rose into one of the most tremendous mysteries, one of the most awful miracles, according to its own pretensions, that has ever been recorded as exhibited on the face of the earth.

Such is the way in which ceremony goes on, even when its origin is innocent and consistent with the best exercise of intelligence. Reformation is hard indeed, whatever be the energies with which reformation is attempted. In this instance we cannot say it has been accomplished. Other associations have arisen, and the present form has rather been a divergence into a different track of thought than anything like a proper return upon the steps by which the ascent of mystery was gained.

But, usually, ceremony arises from a different source. It flourishes in the soil of ignorance, and its stages may be distinctly marked out as they are realised by the combination of the performance of ceremony with the growth of intelligence. The first idea of ceremony usually is *the*

action of man upon God. In its first form, ceremony is something by which man actually endeavours to act upon God. This was originally contemplated even in a physical sense. When we read in the book of Genesis that the Lord smelled the sweet savour of the Patriarch's sacrifice, we are told by commentators that the writer adapts his style to human conceptions. It is true; and it shows what were the conceptions then entertained. It was believed in antiquity, literally believed, that the fume of sacrifice was pleasing in the nostrils of the supernatural being to whom victims were offered. It was believed even that their deities derived nourishment, corporeal nourishment, from these offerings. It was in a comparatively enlightened country, in a great empire, that we find a feast set forth for Bel and the Dragon, according to the stories handed down to us in the Apocrypha, stories no doubt faithfully representing the superstitions which at a certain period prevailed through that extended region. Man finds himself, as he thinks, in certain cases, able to minister to the divine power on which in other cases he feels dependant; and it was not without occasion that the demand in the name of Jehovah was made in one of the Psalms, "will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?" There were deities who were believed to do this, and men who furnished provisions for the sake of securing their favour.

From this absurdity, ceremony passed into a somewhat less offensive, a mental or moral rather than a physical, form of influence. The vanity or pride of supposed deities being considered, temples were promised to be erected to their glory, offerings, representative paintings, or sculptures were to grace their temples, and to show forth their might to all who should resort thither. Odes and thanksgivings and games were promised in honour of deities, that they might be incited by that thirst of fame which prevails among men; and thus be led to favourable and propitious actions. Even with this view, the human

mind became dissatisfied. The inherent absurdity was too great for it to remain content therewith, and then came the second stage of ceremony, which is that of the supposed *action of God upon man*. The first stage of ceremony is the supposed action of man upon God; the second, the supposed action of God upon man: and this was believed to be realised in the prophetic faculty of augurs; in the indwelling of the divine power in consecrated images; in the outpouring of a divine energy upon devoted individuals; in the imparting, by laying on of hands, a spirit of knowledge, wisdom, or power by one favoured individual to others, that thus they might become the guides of the people in what related to religious matters. Throughout a large extent of ancient religion, and no small portion of modern religion, we find ceremony bearing this character. Consecrated persons, consecrated vestments, consecrated buildings, consecrated localities, the mountain, hill, or grove, or plain; consecrated material objects, whether water, wine, oil, or fire; these are supposed to be, as it were, the inlets by which the divine afflatus is received, and man brings himself within the sphere of an influence which he cannot command, but which commands him, and so works out his good and blessing. As the mind becomes impatient of this—as it detects what is called chance, or as it finds a merely natural influence in what it has been accustomed to regard as preternatural, another step is taken—the third stage of ceremony is arrived at, which is that of an *action upon the individual himself*. He no longer practices a ceremony because he believes it will work upon God; or because he believes that in it God is preternaturally working upon him: but he finds that, in consequence either of old associations, or of natural fitness, or of the particular tendency of his mind, certain observances put him into a particular state; that state he deems a religious one; to be in it is the object of his aspiration; these means and appliances are conducive, as he thinks, to such a result, and so he has

recourse to them merely as one of the many links of cause and effect which may be traced in the world, and which constitute machinery by which he can become as it were his own master, and realise for himself what still, in its outward appearance, seems to typify to mankind the intervention of the Deity. From these stages the next and the last is, that of *the action of man upon man*. When the notion of working on God has given way to the notion of God's working upon us ; when this has been superseded by that of man's working upon himself, there is but one thing left. He perceives that natural fitness is not the real attribute of what should properly be religious ceremony ; he grows tired of practising an illusion upon his own mind ; but he still holds that it is a very good and a very useful one for other minds, and so observances are practised when all faith in them is gone ; when all notion of their influencing the Deity, or his influencing us in them, has vanished ; when they have not even the recommendation to the individual's own conscience of a natural tendency to produce such results : but he sees he may still have some power over others, and by a monstrous abuse of the principle of utility, he has recourse to them in order to impress their minds, to act upon their hearts, and induce that which, if it be realised, is realised so far as he is concerned by falsehood and hypocrisy.

Although I have described these as the successive stages of ceremony, they may be realised, and in fact they do exist, contemporaneously. They are enabled to do so by that self-perpetuating power which superstition gives to mere antiquity ; they do so by the re-production of ignorance from generation to generation, which ever supplies a certain extent of material for priestcraft to work upon ; and they may be regarded even as characterising the great demarcations of what is called the Christian world. The Roman Catholic system, for instance, inclines most to, retains more than any other of, the original superstition ; the notion that by ceremony man acts upon

God: for what else than this is the miracle of transubstantiation by the muttered ejaculations of the priest? What else than this are the offerings promised to saints and angels, the gods of Catholicism, which have replaced the mythology of antiquity, the promise to them of votive offerings for shrines, of tapers whose light is to burn to their glory, and of the more enduring forms of painting or sculpture, or the building of churches consecrated to their names as perpetual monuments? These are evidently efforts to influence, to act upon, supernal power, and employ it for human purposes: they are as much so in reality, though perhaps not so gross in form, as the worst that can be found in the annals of the remotest and most ignorant antiquity.

For the next stage, that of the supposed action of God upon man in ceremony, we must look to the Methodists and the more enthusiastic of the dissenting sects. From the time of the Puritans downward, there has always been a large body of believers in a particular, special, preternatural agency over them: something which, when the Bible was read, gave to the words a power that was not in the words themselves, nor in their meaning, nor in the natural associations that surrounded them; but a peculiar influence incorporate as it were in those words, and making that spirit and life to them which was a mere dead letter to others. There has always been a large class believing that in opening the Bible on emergencies, the passage on which the eye might fall would be an oracle to guide their steps, a divine direction in the particular difficulties of their lives. There have been those who have traced this influence and operation through the whole course of their religious progress, who have resolved all into this, and have called it the life of God in their souls, and who exhibit to us on a large scale the history, the minute and detailed history, of that view of ceremony in which it is the action of God upon man.

The semi-rational sects of theologians, as the Unit-

rians, and those who approach towards them, exemplify the next, the third stage, in which ceremonies are practised not from either of the two previous reasons, but on account of their supposed agency in the way of natural cause and effect, upon the mind of the individual. Thus we find many of this class commemorating the Lord's Supper, and having recourse to other observances; and when we ask where is their authority for such as divine institutions, they tell us they do not regard them as such. Why then do they practice them when they are generally so regarded? Because it tends to put their minds in a better state. They affirm, that though Christ did not command them, in any sense which applies to the present day and present circumstances, yet they feel very much impressed with baptism or sacrament; it makes them feel more solemn and devout; and so they have recourse to it, and keep up the form when all notions of authoritative religious ceremony have evaporated from their thoughts; they feel the action on them, as they believe, and on that principle and that alone do they practise it.

The action upon others, and the going through forms chiefly, if not exclusively, for the sake of this agency, is a characteristic of the Established Church, and distinguishes it as peculiarly as do the different views that have been enumerated mark out the Catholic, the Methodist, and the semi-rational bodies of religionists: for we cannot but perceive in the articles and established forms of prayer and observance many things which the most enlightened of its adherents have long since renounced, and some which we can scarcely imagine any intelligent mind in the present day to be seriously impressed with as true: but there they are, and many people who believe themselves most happily righteous, go on repeating "Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," in order that others may repeat as they repeat, and may think themselves miserable sinners, and be kept humble accordingly. Thus it is, that going to church, and joining in forms in which

no interest is felt, is done for the sake of example ; that is, something is done as a religious ceremony where there is no religious ceremony to the performer's perception, but where he makes others believe there is ; and so he does that which tends, according to his notion of and reliance upon their superstition, to keep them in order, and give him better assurance of peace and security in his temporal relations with them. It was in reference to the power which may be exercised over others, that a shrewd observer said to the King of France, " were he the mightiest monarch in the world he would allow nobody to celebrate high mass but himself." Political authorities have generally grasped at ecclesiastical influence, from a perception of the effect with which it may be worked for the purposes to which I have just adverted. I need not shew how it altogether loses the character of religion, when it is employed with such motives and for such purposes.

What, then, it may be said—what ceremony can be tolerated ? If characters so general as these are to be regarded as exceptionable, where is the unexceptionable ? What is it that we may do on such occasions—on such a public national occasion as that which has just been presented ? What is there that may be done, without its being taken offence at, and condemned as superstitious ? To this I reply, there are two grounds on which ceremony, whether religious or civil, is justifiable, and only two that I am aware of. The first is, that of specific divine appointment. Only let authority be produced, such authority as the Jew pleads for his Sabbath. He sees in the books of Moses, which he receives in the plenitude of divine authority, a particular day marked out, set apart, connected with the recollection of a particular event, and the observance of it enjoined in a particular mode. All this he does, and so far his case is substantiated. Then comes the Christian Sabbatarian : he substitutes another day for this particular day ; he substitutes another association for this particular association connected with the

day; he substitutes another mode of observance for the mode of observance originally enjoined; and yet professes to found his ceremony on the very same authority. His case as clearly breaks down with him, as that of the Jew affords him a substantive authority. For myself, I confess I do not perceive in the New Testament any divinely instituted ceremonial whatever, complicated or simple. Its religion appears to me to be a system which arose in the decay and amid the abuses of ancient ceremony, however that ceremony might originate: which was in contrast with the darkness, with the "beggarly elements," as the apostle called them, by which it was surrounded; which rose triumphant in their ruins, and was most pure and bright when they were scattered to all the winds of heaven in the dissolution of the Jewish polity, and the destruction of the temple, of the city and the nation of Israel. However, if there be ceremonies which seem to any to have such authority, in that consists their individual vindication.

The only other ground is that of natural fitness or conventional agreement. By natural fitness, I mean that which appeals to the most common associations of human nature; that which makes some movement, or gesticulation, or emblem, generally intelligible, and generally interesting, and therefore worthy of adoption. By conventional agreement, I mean such an understanding as this—that certain portions of dress or of adornment being connected with certain offices, as the crown with kingly dignity, its placing on the brow of the person called to occupy that station is a fit and apt emblematic performance or ceremony to be connected with the induction into the actual functions of the office. Now much which was natural, which might in this sense be called natural in the east, has lost its meaning with us; as the practice for instance of immersion with water—with them, a type of purification, and applied to proselytes from the grossness of idolatry to the simplicity and purity of mono-

theism: with them it had meaning; with us it has no meaning whatever. We have our expressive forms and modes of action; the uncovered head, the bended knee, the choral song, the simultaneous response: in these, and other ways, and by the exhibition of such emblems as those of which I spake, we can typify what we mean to do, and form a ceremonial adapted to any national or public occasions that present themselves. Were we asked what should be the principles on which a coronation ceremonial may be formed, I do not think there would be much difficulty in the matter. It ought evidently to be a rational form, for we are a civilized and comparatively enlightened nation. It should not embody the defunct superstitions of times that have long gone by. It should not be drawn up with feebleness or verbiage, or in a manner to disgrace the intellectual character of the country. It should bear the stamp of truth; of truth as now received by the best minds of which the nation can boast. Instead of the vain and dull repetitions, the altogether unmeaning forms that we so frequently meet with in ecclesiastical documents, it should have the stately tone of the compositions of Milton, or the princely richness of the style of Bacon, or that majestic simplicity which seems to flourish not "in immortal youth" but in immortal age, surrounded with every attribute of power, in the best portions of the common translation of the scriptures. Thus composed, and with forms adapted to the circumstances of the people, there might surely be a ceremonial for which no Englishman need to blush; from which he need not turn away at the utter nonsense, at the vain and effete remains of antiquity with which it is disfigured, but which might be regarded as worthy of an enlightened people, worthy of a nation whose brightest glory is in its intellectual supremacy.

Another requisite would be that such ceremonial should be comprehensive; that it should be adapted for a people

among whom there is almost every theological diversity that can be imagined. It should include the Hindoo, and the Mahometan, and the Roman Catholic, as well as the Church of England and the different bodies of dissenters; and partake of the varieties of thought on religious matters of the human race itself; or rather, be framed in the simplicity of devotion by which these varieties are pervaded. It is not in the coronation of the queen of a realm so wide, and in its spiritual not less than its geographical boundaries and extent so diversified, that the impudence and arrogance of sectarianism should thrust itself forward and attempt to bind down majesty to its own service, and make one of the most prominent features of the ceremony the upholding of its own properties and dignities. The monarch should be crowned king or queen of the empire, of the universal British people, in all their diversities; and not of this or that sect, class, or party. Nor is there any difficulty, except to the narrow mind of a mere technical theologian, who can see no worship of God but in his own little cant phrases, which he has repeated by rote till all meaning has evaporated. The simplest worship is ever the sublimest worship; and God is most honoured when he is adored, not as the God of this or that petty clan, but as the

“Father of all, in ev’ry age,
In ev’ry clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.”

The only remaining quality that I need specify is that it should be a ceremony adapted to a free people. We are a monarchy; but the representative principle is recognised amongst us, and wherever it is recognised it must virtually be the prominent principle; and if it be so virtually, it ought to stand forth as such in the forms and language of public ceremonials. The crown of this country is not held by divine right, whatever falsehoods to that effect may be foisted into professedly religious cere-

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monies. It is held by act of parliament; by an act of parliament prescribing the terms and conditions on which it is held, and the circumstances under which it is declared to be forfeited. With this then should a ceremonial correspond. It should not bear upon its brow the old mark of feudalism. It should not keep up forms of vassalage, of which the substance in most respects has passed away; or where any of it remains, remains only to show itself in a state of ceaseless warfare with what must become the predominant principles of our political constitution. There should be nothing whatever of such ceremonial that savours of servility, but a spirit of freedom diffused through the whole, breathing and brooding over it as the Spirit of God did upon the waters of chaos, to call forth the order, grandeur, and harmony of creation. Under the inspiration of such influences might words and forms be constructed into a ceremonial worthy of the august temple which has been properly chosen for its celebration; worthy of the occasion, the solemn investiture of an individual with the power of the supreme magistracy, to be exercised over millions and millions of human beings; and worthy of the parties now concerned in that ceremonial, the youthful and promising representative of a long line of kings, and the representatives of a great nation, to whose might and majesty all the regality that ever existed or can exist is but as a feather upon the wind.

LECTURE II.

HAVING thus endeavoured to trace the progress of religious ceremony, and, in tracing its progress, at the same time to analyse its nature, it now remains to apply these principles to the religious service incorporated with the recent solemnity of the coronation.

The first section is entitled "The Entrance into the Church." It commences with this anthem:—

"I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into
"the House of the Lord. For there is the Seat of Judg-
"ment, even the Seat of the House of David. O pray for
"the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love
"Thee. Peace be within thy walls, and Prosperity within
"thy Palaces.

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the
"Holy Ghost:

"As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
"be: world without end. Amen."

I do not object to this anthem, that it is couched in oriental phraseology, widely remote in its literal meaning from all existing circumstances. It has been good for the world that by means of the Scriptures something of oriental phraseology, of oriental imagination and feeling, has been grafted upon the cold roughness of our northern stock. It is not at all amiss that a religious language which is figurative, provided we perceive the meaning, the truth, the beauty of the imagery, should be habitually employed. This practice tends to sustain the common mind in a poetical condition, and to associate that condition with religious feeling and observance. Let Jordan's stream be the river of death; and heaven the "promised land" that lies beyond; and spiritual worship, when numbers join in homage that mounts from the

common heart of humanity to the common Father, be our Jerusalem Temple; and Christ, the pure and meek teacher of wisdom and the victim of persecution; let him be "our passover." Still, in using such phraseology, it is necessary that we *do* perceive an analogy; that we bear in mind that although oriental and figurative, it is still not to be inappropriate or unmeaning. I do not cavil here at the use of the phrase, "House of the Lord." Let that splendid edifice, so fraught with the symbols of eternal duration, so massive in its structure, and so light and graceful, and yet at the same time enduring in its ornaments; that building, containing the dust or the monuments of so many of our greatest men; men whose names make the glory of our nation, and of our nature: poets, statesmen, philosophers; that building, so rich in the multiplied influences of architecture, of statuary, of associations suggested by immediate impressions upon sense, and of those which derive their power from historical and antique recollections; let that building be, and if ecclesiastical dignitaries and those who construct services like this, so please, let it be called, the "House of the Lord;" few buildings raised by human hands have better deserved the glorious appellation; but then, let those who bestow the name, justify its appellation. Let it not, while called so, be made the seat of extortioners or a den of thieves. Let it be as the House of the Lord, open to his children, open to mankind, there to feel his influences, and to resort at will when they would subject their minds to the power of its manifold associations, and trace and worship God as they trace and worship him amid those works of nature in whose attributes edifices of such sublimity and magnificence seem to have most participation. It is the "House of the Lord;" or thus it would be, in the same sense as that in which the humblest barn where two or three meet together in the name of Christ, and the spirit of Christ, to offer their worship, is also a House of the Lord; in the same sense as the starry heavens are the dome of his house, the adornments of a

temple not made with hands, where his glory may be seen and his presence felt: in the same sense as the solitary wilderness is his house, where the wandering shepherd may rest his head upon a stone, as Jacob did of old, and dream of the ladder that ascends from earth to heaven, and on which angels of God pass and repass with their messages of beneficence; or as that in which the crowded city is the House of the Lord too, where all the multifarious beatings of the human heart, the countless combinations of human thought and feeling, passion and interest, are working out the designs of his Providence and are promoting his glory in the advancement of his rational creatures. In such a sense well may that edifice claim so dignified an appellation. But it is with less propriety, and with no such perception of truth or analogy, that we go on with the description of it as containing "the Seat of Judgment, even the Seat of the House of David." Our judicial tribunals are elsewhere, and far hence is the sepulchre which is now the only earthly seat of the House of David; although there may rest under its venerable shade the ashes of monarchs great as David, and of poets whose strains breathe a kindred inspiration with those which were accompanied on the Harp of Zion.

The theological abuse of oriental phraseology consists in its being pursued, by mere verbal association, until all analogy and propriety are lost sight of: and such seems to be the case here; for, starting with the "House of the Lord," we are led onwards to a description that only belongs to the Jewish monarchy, and then are exhorted to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem," and are promised prosperity if we love Jerusalem. And now what glimmering of sense is discernible? To speak literally, the peace of London and Westminster was that for which the parties concerned had much more reason to pray. What, literally or figuratively, had they to do with Jerusalem; with Jerusalem, now resting in the peace of slavery under the sway of the Turk; or the Jerusalem of old, whose temple was

reduced to dust and the dust scattered to the winds? But thus it is when language is used conventionally; when, however poetical in itself, for want of a perception of analogical truth, the soul of its poetry is evaporated; and from that which might be most beautiful and touching, we are led into a world of unreality, a tangled wilderness of words, an interminable waste of meaningless phraseology.

But if we pass with little objection the Jewish language of this anthem, what shall we say to the doxology, the sectarian doxology, by which it is concluded? What a combination is here! The anthem itself comes from times, language, feelings, that belong to the religion of old Judea. The doxology comes from the dim speculations of the middle ages of nominal Christianity. It is a relique of the race of saints that spent their lives in darkening the world by words without knowledge, until they resolved all religion into dogma, and all dogma into unintelligible mysteries. What an incongruity is presented in this combination! David and St. Athanasius, the persecuting word-monger of the dark ages and the sweet singer of Israel, side by side, harnessed to draw the triumphal chariot of a British coronation! This appendage sectarianizes the whole service. "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: As it was in the beginning"—it was NOT so in the beginning: the doxology has no claim to the remoteness of antiquity here assumed: no such phraseology was employed, no such thoughts were entertained, according to any traces in history, by those whose wisdom, whose speculations, whose emotions, and the wonders of whose lives, are recorded to us in the books of the Old Testament Scriptures. Its "beginning" was only a beginning in the season of mental darkness and degradation: and that it "shall be" so "world without end" is a bolder prophecy than even episcopalian arrogance can challenge inspiration for. The absurdity of sectarian exclusiveness in a ceremony belonging to the British people is glaring. This is not national worship; this is

not the national faith; it was not the faith of some of the greatest men that our country has ever produced: not the faith of Milton or of Newton, of Locke, of Lardner or of Hartley; and equally alien from it were many of the poets and philosophers whom they represent, and at the head of whose bands their names would be placed in marshaling the intellectual aristocracy of the land. Nor has it any claim to be put forward as the faith of the British nation when inaugurating its chief magistrate.

The anthem is followed by a direction for the passing of her Majesty "up through the Body of the Church," taking the place assigned to her, and so on; and then it is said, "Having passed by Her Throne, She makes Her humble Adoration, and then Kneeling at the Faldstool set for Her before Her Chair, uses some short private prayers." According to a previously printed and circulated direction, at a particular moment, the Queen "uses some short private prayers!" The practice of private, that is of personal prayer; the identification of the created with the Creative Mind; the casting of the one upon the other, as it were, for strength and support, is undoubtedly a practice to which a rightly constituted intellect will find itself impelled, especially on great emergencies, and one which must be regarded with complacency. But assuredly it is questionable how far such a practice can be made the subject of a previous printed direction; of an injunction that can only reach the outward form, and insure the practice of that outward form whatever may be passing within; and which promises to the whole body of spectators that by a particular individual at that particular period such an outward form shall be exhibited: a process which places majesty in the position of a *figurante*, and makes the most personal, inscrutable, and spiritual act of religion, even private prayer itself, the subject of what can be little better than a sort of stage direction.

The next section is entitled "The Recognition," and the purport of it seems to be to identify the person of the

Queen to the different portions of the assembly. The people are told that they are come this day to do their homage, and are asked whether they be willing to do it?—a question which would have had more pertinence if throughout the whole course of the ceremony there had been any time assigned during which the people, as distinguished from the privileged classes, might have rendered their homage. The form of the recognition itself is no doubt the shadow, the faint and fast-fading shadow of an original election of the monarch. It points to the time when the chief magistrate of the country was the choice of the people of the country, or when at least their public and solemn assent was essential to his induction into that high office.

Section 3 is entitled, “The First Oblation,” and consists in the ceremony of the Queen’s going “down to the altar, kneeling upon the steps of it,” and presenting, “a Pall, or Altar-Cloth of Gold,” and “an Ingot or Wedge of Gold of a pound weight;” and in the course of the Service there are various other Oblations, including the Regalia, and a purse of Gold, &c., all of which are solemnly made an offering, a donation, from the Queen to the Deity. This action belongs to the first and most ignorant stage of superstitious ceremony. The Jehovah of the Jews, although the Jehovah of the Jews was only the comparatively barbarous notion of a Deity, and in attributes far inferior to Christ’s description of God as the universal Father, the infinite Spirit; yet the Jehovah of the Jews indignantly demanded, in reference to sacrifices and offerings and oblation, “will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?” and he who disclaims any such offerings of animals that roamed the field or forest, what occasion has he or what propriety is there in offering to him “a Pall, or Altar-Cloth of Gold?” If it is only meant that these things are the perquisites of the priesthood—if this be only a different form of presenting to the dean of Westminster or to any other of the dig-

nitaries engaged in the ceremonial a valuable piece of cloth of gold, then let the oblation to the priest be given and accepted as an oblation to the priest: but why, in the name of heaven, should it be made an offering to the Majesty of heaven?

The Litany follows, which I pass over as belonging to the common service of the Church, and having in that connexion been made the subject of criticism at other times. The 5th Section, "The beginning of the Communion Service," chiefly deserves notice for two or three minor points. It begins with the Sanctus, "Holy! Holy! Holy, Lord God of Hosts." And why is this expression in reference to the Deity, "God of Hosts," kept up and made common amongst us? In tracing the names employed to designate Deity in the Scriptures, a regular succession has been remarked indicative of the progress of opinion; the first appellation, Elohim, or the Gods, clearly originating amid idolatrous times and people, and by its connexion with singular verbs and adjectives showing the first great step which was taken in emerging out of the darkness of Polytheism. Jehovah, the next term in use, became the proper name of the national God of the Hebrews; and it generally refers to the Deity in that capacity, one stage, as it were, above that of earthly sovereignty. The expression, "Lord of Hosts," is military--it arose in, and its scripture use is confined, with two or three exceptions only, to the period in which the Jewish government had ceased to be a theocratical republic and became an oriental monarchy: a time when the people were more warlike than at any other period, and when the inevitable tendency was to worship the Deity as the God of battle. But surely this is not an appellation by which it is well or worthy that a Christian nation should invoke the Spirit, the All-pervading Spirit, the tendencies of whose creation and whose laws are to realise eventually his own glory in peace and good will, in the harmony and love of his rational creatures; especially on such an oc-

casion. I may also remark here, that, as is usual in the repetition of the Commandments, the injunction to keep the seventh day holy is retained—"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day," this commandment applying only to the seventh day of the week; and the people are made to respond, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law," although neither those who repeat nor those who respond have the slightest intention of ever paying any such observance to that day, or of sanctifying any other day by that enjoined cessation of domestic work.

The Epistle selected for the occasion, to be read by one of the Bishops, is from the second chapter of the 1st Epistle of Peter, commencing at the 13th verse:—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the King, as supreme," and so on; a passage not judiciously selected, when we consider to how much misinterpretation this first phrase is liable, and how frequently and grossly it has been misinterpreted, so as to teach the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, whatever may be the course which rulers or rather tyrants take. That such was not the meaning of the Apostles, every body knows very well. It was an ordinance of man in their time, that Jupiter and Juno, and Mars and Apollo should be worshipped; but they rendered no such adoration. It was an ordinance of man, that almost every individual act of social life should be accompanied by some act of Idolatry, but they submitted not themselves. They persevered in passive resistance to these ordinances until they overthrew the system and unseated idolatry from its supremacy on the throne of the Cæsars; and as an abuse so gross has prevailed, it would surely be well, in a country that claims to have a Government founded on the principles of political liberty, to avoid a phrase which is overloaded with slavish associations.

This section finishes with the Nicene Creed, the repe-

tition of which probably belongs to that class of ceremony in which individuals who practise it are endeavouring to act upon their own minds: for so strange are some of the tenets of that creed, that though I can understand how a man by repetition may endeavour to force himself into something like acquiescence in it, I cannot understand how he should expect it to act upon others in an age like the present.

The next section indicates the place of the Sermon, which is not yet before us. That is followed by Section 7—"The Oath." To this there is the common objection which applies to the administration of oaths in this country; that to the phrase with which it concludes, "So help me, God,"—a phrase the feebleness and inefficiency of which have been well exposed by Paley in his *Moral Philosophy*, but to which there is also an objection that Paley did not urge, but which has been strongly put by Bentham. It is an attempt to direct and pledge the operations of Omnipotence upon a certain contingency. It invokes the Deity, and assumes as the obligation of the oath that the invocation will be heeded, to restrain or put forth his infinite power according to the direction of the administrator. It belongs to that first stage of ceremony in which man attempts to act upon God, and thinks that by the use of certain forms he has insured the result, and committed the Deity to act in the way he contemplates. Leaving this, however, we only remark on the Oath, that it is a condensed expression of sectarian predominance and tenacity; that the dearest rights and fundamental laws of a nation can rise in it to no higher level, can occupy no more prominent position, can claim no more binding acknowledgment than the peculiar privileges, however gained, of a particular sect, of a theological party, or rather of a sectarian priesthood. "Will you to the utmost of your power (the Archbishop asks) maintain the laws of God, the true Profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by

“ Law?” Why, here is a trap for conscience. “ The true profession of the Gospel.” To be sure, such “ true Profession” ought to be maintained by every one, who, finding the truth of the Gospel, is impelled by the convictions which have beamed in upon the soul to give them utterance, and to lend whatever weight can attach from the powers of his own mind or the consistency of his own character. But then this “ Profession” is identified with the “ Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law,” whether that be or be not “ the true Profession of the Gospel” as it commends itself to individual conscience. “ And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the Settlement of the United Church of England and Ireland, and the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government thereof, as by Law established within England and Ireland, and the Territories thereunto belonging ?”—thus endeavouring to preclude all chance of improvement, all openings for rendering their doctrine or worship, discipline or government more conformable with the opinions that may prevail and with juster views that may obtain currency. “ And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England and Ireland, and to the Churches there committed to their Charge, all such Rights and Privileges, as by Law do, or shall appertain to Them, or any of Them ?”—Here again is ambiguity, pernicious ambiguity. The Chief Magistrate is sworn to maintain all such privileges as do belong to the hierarchy or as shall belong to the hierarchy. But how if the privileges that *shall* belong to them by the voice of the legislature should be an abridgment of the privileges that *do* belong to them, in what condition is the Sovereign then placed ? Assuredly in a doubtful one, and doubtful it was felt to be, or rather no doubt was felt on the subject, but the oath conscientiously understood to preclude all improvement by George the Third, who for so many years resisted the rights of the Roman Catholics of Ireland. It is not in this Royal inauguration that any sect should dare to

raise its head and make its monarch a bond slave to its own party and petty purposes.

The eighth section is entitled "The Anointing;" and in this portion of the ceremony there seems to be a feeble and remote attempt, but still an attempt, to invest the whole with positive divine authority. It might be enquired as to this entire service, what is its authority? does it claim to be of God, or does it profess to be of man? and if of man, by whom agreed upon and when instituted? where are the credentials of its national adoption and of its national obligation? It has no such to offer—it has grown up as it were by the accumulation of tradition, with now and then a quiet innovation in the indirect manner that belongs to the Established Church of this country, among the remarkable effects of which course has been the incorporation of a forgery in one of the articles of its faith. But there seems here an attempt at exciting the associations peculiar to a divine ordinance. In one of the prayers, the Archbishop says, "Bless and Sanctify *thy Chosen Servant* Victoria, who by our Office and Ministry "is now to be anointed with this Oil, and *consecrated* "Queen of this Realm." The oil is called "Holy Oil," as if there were in it some indwelling of divine virtue or power: and when it is employed the phraseology used is, "Be thou anointed with Holy Oil, as Kings, Priests, and "Prophets, were anointed: And as Solomon was anointed "King by Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, so "be you anointed, blessed, and consecrated Queen over "this People, whom the Lord your God *hath given you* to "rule and govern, in the name of the Father, and of the "Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here is too much approximation towards that attempt at imposition which was described as the last and worst stage of ceremony, when practices are meant to have a particular effect on the minds of the people, grounded simply on their presumed ignorance and superstition.

This portion of the service is introduced by a Hymn,

which in the terseness of its language is of more merit as a composition than very much indeed of the service before us, but to which there are exceptions of a different kind. It runs thus :—

“ Come, Holy Ghost, our Souls inspire,
And warm them with thy Heav’nly fire.
Thou who th’ Anointing Spirit art
To Us thy sevenfold Gifts impart.
Let thy bless’d Uction from above
Be to Us Comfort, Life, and Love.

Enable with Celestial Light
The weakness of our Mortal Sight:
Anoint our Hearts, and cheer our Face
With the abundance of thy Grace :
Keep far our Foes, give Peace at Home ;
Where thou dost dwell, no Ill can come ;

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Spirit of Both, to be but One.
That so through Ages all along,
This may be our triumphant Song ;
In Thee, O Lord, we make our boast,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

The word “Ghost” is exceptionable. But what shall we say of the last petition? It has been made a great argument against non-conformist societies, that by the choice which they claim of their own teachers, the people are dictating to the instructor: that the instructor is too much under the influence of those whom he should be in a position only to treat as his scholars; and that this essential evil in every form of popular church government, shows the necessity of the interposition of a higher power which shall assign its teachers to the people, and place over them men to whose instruction they are to submit. But here, where the hierarchy of the Church addresses the Omniscent Deity, is a positive instruction as to the kind of wisdom that is to be imparted; we find a direction to the Deity as to the faith which he is to infuse into his creatures’

minds and to keep uppermost in their thoughts. The prayer is not "teach us to know the truth;" not "teach us what we are to think so far as we can think anything of the "Infinite Majesty on high"—no, it is,

"Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Spirit of Both, to be but One."

Teach us Trinitarianism, and teach us nothing else, and make this, whether right or wrong, our everlasting "boast"—this is what we wish to know—this is what we ask of the Deity to make us know—while we assume the attitude of pupils prescribing even to an Omniscient teacher the doctrines which he is to inculcate upon our consciences. How different is this from the petition of the poet, whether he were Roman Catholic or unbeliever:—

"If I am right, O teach my heart
Still in the right to stay:
If I am wrong, thy grace impart
To find that better way."

The disposition evinced, whether it imply the infallibility of the Catholic Church, or the indifference of infidelity, shows itself to advantage by the side of the mock humility of Protestant Episcopacy. The ninth section is, "The presenting of the Spurs and Sword, and the Oblation of the said Sword." On this matter of Oblation I have already commented, but I will read the admonition with which the Archbishop presents the Sword to the Queen, putting it into her right hand:—

"Receive this Kingly Sword, brought now from the
"Altar of God, and delivered to you by the hands of us
"the Bishops and Servants of God, though unworthy.
"*With this Sword* do justice, stop the growth of Iniquity,
"protect the holy Church of God, help and defend widows
"and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay,
"maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform
"what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order: that
"doing these things, you may be glorious in all virtue;

“ and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life,
 “ that you may reign for ever with Him in the life which
 “ is to come. Amen.”

A most appropriate admonition in those ages of chivalry, from which perhaps the substance of it has descended, but considered in relation to present circumstances and the person addressed, of marvellous inappropriateness. Such language would have thrilled the heart of Richard Cœur de Lion, and he would have grasped the sword with fell purpose to wield it to the destruction of the Infidels and the recovery of Palestine. This is an admonition to be addressed to a knight-errant setting forth in quest of adventures to deliver the oppressed all the world over. Strange would it seem to the good people of this country were the Queen to take literally the Archbishop's injunction, and go forth riding a tilt at iniquity and heresy, herself dealing the mortal blows of justice, and cutting down the legal authorities that rob widows or orphans by the consumption of their inheritance in the process of litigation.

The tenth section. “The Investing with the Royal Robe, and the Delivery of the Orb,” is accompanied with an admonition to which a similar objection cannot be taken. It ends, however, with a very questionable sentence. “And when you see this Orb set under the Cross, remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer. For He is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth; King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: So that *no man can reign happily*, who derives not his Authority from Him, and directs not all his Actions according to His Laws.”

The introduction of this peculiar notion of the Kingship of Christ over the world, whatever Theological evidence it may be supposed to possess, should have been considered with a view to the foreign relations of this country, and the different classes of potentates with whom it is in alliance. Are we prepared to say, that no one can reign happily but a Protestant Prince acknow-

ledging Jesus Christ according to the dogmas which are affirmed or implied in this service? May not the Roman Catholic monarchs of Europe, although they are reprobates from the divinity of English Episcopacy, yet reign happily? Nay, are we prepared to say that Mahometan or Heathen potentates may not in wisdom and in justice direct the exertions of their subjects, execute the dictates of right, and lead on a nation to prosperity and improvement? The Pasha of Egypt or the Sultan of Turkey does not derive his authority from Christ, nor professes to direct "his actions according to his laws;" and yet with these powers we maintain relations of amity, and rejoice at the progress of their subjects in the career of civilization. We look back in history with delight to many and many a reign the authority of which was not derived from Christ, nor its powers conducted with a reverence (as such) for his laws. The glories of Haroun al Raschid would continue to gladden childhood, although the theological spirit that dictated such expressions as these should reprove the pleasure as a mental rebellion against the laws of religion. But of that there is little fear; when divines come into the sphere of common life, their language obeys the control of common sense.

The next section (the eleventh) is the Investiture with the Ring, and the Sceptre bearing the Dove, in which the only thing to be noticed is the feebleness and obscurity of the language, little worthy of such a solemnity. "*Be so merciful that you be not too remiss; so execute justice, that you forget not mercy. Judge with Righteousness, and reprove with Equity, and accept no man's Person. Abase the Proud, and lift up the Lowly; punish the Wicked, protect and cherish the Just, and lead your people in the way wherein they should go.*" Although there is a sprinkling of Scripture words, yet the whole character of the composition is most feeble and jejune. Still it is not so thoroughly contemptible as that of section thirteen, "The presenting of the Holy Bible."

In such bald, disjointed, and emptily conventional phrases as these does the British Hierarchy commend the Divine Volume to Britain's Queen :—

“ Our gracious Queen, we present you with this book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom ; This is the Royal Law ; these are the lively Oracles of God. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that read the words of this book ; that keep and do the things contained in it. For these are the words of eternal life, able to make you wise and happy in this world, nay, wise unto salvation, and so happy for evermore, through faith which is in Christ Jesus ; to whom be glory for ever.”

Only imagine any pretender to Literature showing so utter a want of appreciation as in such a style as this to praise any of the grand classics of our native language ! It would scarcely have been creditable to the Teacher of a Sunday school, bestowing a copy of Miss Hannah More's Sacred Dramas or Mrs. Trimmer's Scripture Stories on the young charity children, and vainly supposing that by diluting his atoms of thought he was levelling his speech to their comprehension.

The next section is “The putting on of the Crown ;” and here my remarks must relate to the action rather than to the phraseology. At the moment when the Archbishop placed the Crown on the head of the Queen, amid the enthusiastic acclamations of that vast assemblage, echoed from without by the roaring of artillery and shoutings of countless multitudes ; and immediately the peers and peeresses raised their coronets and placed them on their own brows, the effect is said to have been, it must have been, surpassingly grand. To a certain extent, the grandeur was mental as well as external. In that self-crowning of the barons of the realm spoke the voice of old feudality, of Saxon tenacity, of Norman pride. The Archbishop crowned the Queen. They crowned themselves, claiming thereby to be her Peers. There is in the action the remains

of that indomitable pride which would not acknowledge any superiority over themselves but what was spontaneously conceded by themselves. It evidently tends to set at nought all assumption of any other superiority, and with it the ceremony too. Let bishop or archbishop, let the priest of whatever church, say what prayers he pleases, and use what gesticulations he pleases, we are (such is its language), we are the source and champions of our own rights; the oil of our anointing is the courage that glows in our hearts and the might of our strong arms, with which we will defend those rights and assert ourselves the peers of the highest rank that can be named as existing in the community that we constitute. And were there no lower species of rank in this country; were there no human beings existing under the dignity of a baron, this would be the height of moral sublimity, as it must have been of external and imposing effect. But with that limitation, the sublimity ends: for this is only an assertion by the privileged classes of the country. They bear their own crowns, and acknowledge only a voluntary subordination to the power which is crowned by sacerdotal authority: but as to all others, they are totally forgotten. Each class of peers, in rank and order, proffer their homage to the new-crowned sovereign; but the people are not there with their homage—no, nor any one to represent them, those who bear the character of their representatives being merely spectators. Now does this correspond with the present condition of society? Is it not a fact, impressed upon the laws and constitution of the country, that the people are the nation, and that peers and sovereignty only exist for the common good, and are merely an agency for the promotion of the common good? Is it not a fact that their majesty is the great, the one all-absorbing majesty of the realm from which all other must be derived, and in contingency upon the will of which it must be held? They in their multitudes, they in their freedom and in their power, should have been the soul of the ceremony, that so

the Queen might have been crowned Queen of the Nation, and not merely of a comparatively small number of those who belong to the privileged and the priestly classes. The government of this country, we are told by those who have taken rank amongst the bravest of its chivalry and the loftiest of its aristocracy; the government of this country must be substantially in the House of Commons, in the representatives of the people. There it really is, and eventually must be recognized, whatever form may seem to say the contrary. There is the supreme legislative power of the nation. And yet that power here goes for nothing. There is not a trace or vestige of it—it is not there in its might and its majesty; it is not there even in its humility. It is not there to offer homage or to kneel upon the steps of that throne which can rest alone upon its voluntary submission. Great and fatal is this omission to the claims of the ceremonial on public respect.

Section 14 is “The Benediction,” and it is one to the propriety and to the beauty of which no exception can be taken, unless it be in the second clause. “The Lord give “you a faithful Senate, wise and upright Counsellors and “Magistrates, a loyal Nobility, and a dutiful Gentry; a “pious and learned and useful Clergy; an honest, industrious, and obedient Commonalty.” There seems in this curious distribution of duties, an endeavour to accommodate them to the different gradations of society. Assigning to the Nobility the more voluntary and chivalrous and dignified virtue of loyalty, it allows the Gentry to take their place in the performance of duty merely, while to the honest Commonalty are left the blessings of industry and of obedience. I see not why the Commonalty might not have had loyalty and duty too, nor why there might not have been wished for them some of that piety and learning which it may nevertheless be proper to pray for on behalf of the clergy.

In “The Inthronization,” there is an exhortation which has a good deal of the assuming language that we have

occasionally noticed on the part of the hierarchy, and an attempt to identify the service with divine authority by those remote associations which are all the parties dare venture upon. "Stand firm and hold fast from henceforth
" the Seat and State of Royal and Imperial Dignity, which
" is this day delivered unto you in the Name, and by the
" Authority of Almighty God, and by the hands of Us the
" Bishops and Servants of God, though unworthy." The last word is not without reason if we look a little onward to the Communion Service, to which I shall now pass, having already noticed "The Homage," at least in its omissions.

The service is the usual Communion Service. It contains some of those remarkable expressions by which the Church of England adopts the language of the Church of Rome, and seems to imply even the doctrine of transubstantiation, such as being made "partakers of the body and blood" of Christ—a phrase which is several times repeated. But what I would remark is, that this Communion, this Lord's Supper, is partaken of, on the occasion in question, only by a few members of the episcopal order, and afterwards administered to the Queen. The language is such, however common its use, and however it may be taken on other occasions to describe people in general, the language is such as on this occasion we are compelled to regard as descriptive of those who actually communicated. Now the Bishops, before partaking of the Sacrament, in their general Confession thus describe themselves. They say to the Deity in the presence of the Monarch and of the peerage of the realm, of the members of the House of Commons, and of multitudes beside: "We acknowledge and bewail *our manifold sins and wickedness*, which
" we from time to time *most grievously have committed*, by
" thought; word, and deed, against thy Divine Majesty,
" *provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation* against
" us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for

“ these our misdoings; *the remembrance of them is grievous*
“ unto us; the *burden of them is INTOLERABLE!*”

These words describe a state of mind that really may and does exist, although in a civilized community we may hope its existence is rare; a state of mind in which the consciousness of foul and base guilt weighs down the soul into an abjectness that misbecomes a rational being under any other circumstances—but a state of mind that assuredly does not mark people out as fit to hold the rod of spiritual or of temporal authority, or to be in any other position than, were they Catholics, of devoting themselves to lives of solitary penance in order to wear out the heart-oppressive sense of guilt, or in a country like this spending their days within the walls of a House of Correction, or presenting themselves as candidates for admission at the portals of a Penitentiary. Such men “fit to govern?” We can scarcely say they are “fit to live,” unless it be in the earnest endeavour to wipe off some stain of that guilt by which their minds and consciences are so foully blotted, and to render some service to society—to advance if possible towards that balance which it is not likely they should ever reach between their future good and their past evil deeds. It is perfectly monstrous, if this account of their own souls be true, that in such a day of high solemnity, they should dare, or be allowed, to occupy the foremost place, and begirt the person of the Queen, the young, ingenuous, and virtuous Queen; they, in their rank and self-condemned pollutions!

I know we shall be told they are worthy, excellent, learned, and pious persons. Why then do they tell us, why do they tell the nation, why do they tell the Deity, to the contrary? Why should hypocrisy, which has been so often desired to assume a virtue though it had it not, assume a vice, a mass of viciousness, that does not exist? Is it right, is it fitting, that language should be severed from its meaning—that such expressions as these should

be employed in reference to any human beings except those unhappy few, if such there be, who are really conscious of being in the wretched state so emphatically described. Is it fitting that the language of guilt should thus be held up to glory—that vice should be sanctified in conventional language, and men taught to do honour to their God, by belying their own natures and consciences? I know such language is used from Sunday to Sunday throughout the different churches of the empire; it is part of that conventionalism by which the very heart and soul of religion have been eaten out—by which men have been taught to use words with no reference to the meaning of the words—by which they have been familiarized with the grovelling notion that the Deity is to be propitiated and his favour gained by loading ourselves with accusations; while from the uttering of one-thousandth part of these imputations by a fellow-creature the individual would recoil with abhorrence, would spurn at the calumniator, and would think himself justified, however meek his spirit, by invoking the power of the law, to interpose its penalties for the protection of his character and for the rectification of the injury.

Religion can only exist in its pure and spiritual reality as its professed language bears the sacred stamp of truth; and here, if ever, throughout such a service as this, should the language of truth have been most anxiously preserved. Instead of that, we find truth all abroad. We find truth in the fairs and festivities that were held; the truth of honest-hearted simple enjoyment. We find truth in the theatres that were thrown open; the truth of mirthful or of tearful personation. We find truth abroad in the streets; the truth of respectful loyalty, gazing at such portions of the pomp and show as passed in public, and testifying its sympathy with the occasion. It is only in what is called the “House of the Lord”—it is only in this professedly national and religious ceremony, that we find language stained with the characters of falsehood.

Long and happy and prosperous be the time before there will be any occasion for the repetition of the ceremony! amply and continuously realized be the benedictions that by millions have been poured out upon the head of its object! but nevertheless it is not to be passed over unregarded. The importance of truthfulness of language; of truth to opinion, feeling and conduct, in every concern, whether it be that of daily business or of rare solemnity, cannot be too frequently enforced: and it is needful to point attention to services of this description, in order to sustain that continuous moral criticism upon churches and governments and society in general, by which the improvement of institutions and of society will be best secured. It is important we should do so for the sake of the throne; the throne begirt as it often must be with sycophancy, selfishness, and falsehood; where it is difficult for truth to penetrate, or when it has penetrated to gain firm and enduring footing. There is little excuse for aggravating the temptations by which sovereignty is surrounded, and which deepen to intensity our interest in the safe passage of its individual possessor through the fierce and fiery ordeal created by its possession. We ought to throw the weight of our honestly avowed opinions into the scale of truth on an occasion like the present, from a regard to those classes, the few and the many, whose relative situation is entirely lost sight of in this ceremonial, where the few are made everything, and the many, the millions, nothing. We should declare that such is not the constitution of this country: that the few exist for the many, and all institutions for the sake of raising the condition of those who constitute the body of the community. We should maintain our allegiance to truth for the sake of the church itself, that at length its ministers and prelates may be shamed out of superstitions that have become obsolete, and that if produced now for the first time would be met with ridicule and disgust: that if they will adopt rites and forms, they should have some harmony with the opinions

of the time and with feelings that belong to the common heart of humanity. We should raise our voices for the sake of society, too much infected by the taint of conventionalism, and too apt to tolerate the mere use of words as a substitute for realities. In each and all we should feel, that even an occasion which may not occur again in the lives of the great majority of us, ought not to be passed over without calling forth our fair estimate of what its merits are, and our just censure on sins of omission and of commission.

Oh if, while some of these many mummeries were passing; and while his own incessantly repeated name was ringing like a verbal charm at the end of every admonition, doxology, and prayer, the Invocation had been suddenly answered, and He, Christ, in bodily presence and celestial glory, had presented himself to that august and brilliant assembly—while the young object of the ceremony might have stood as erect and unabashed as any, how would coped and mitred prelates, and coroneted peers, in the midst of all their conventionalisms and worn, out forms and fallacies, have sunk in dismay and confusion as he repeated, “For this cause was I born, and to this end came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the Truth.”

LECTURE III.

THE Sermon delivered, in the course of the Coronation Service, by the Bishop of London, has been published by royal command ; and that command was most fitly issued, because the public must needs have a strong interest in knowing what doctrine, religious, moral, or political, was inculcated upon the mind of the Sovereign at a time so favourable for making a deep and permanent impression. It does indeed claim attention, to judge by internal evidence, on yet higher grounds ; for the preacher speaks of the Archbishop as "God's minister," and of himself in this discourse as "Christ's ambassador:" and to those who are vested with such authority no attention can be too reverential. At the same time, as in the case of other Ministers and Ambassadors, whether attending this solemnity to add to its splendour by their presence, or whether engaged in the more ordinary exercise of their functions, we have surely a right to ask for their credentials from the powers by which they profess to be delegated. Whether we shall find these credentials in the obvious inspiration, or even in the obvious truth, of some of the sentiments which were then advanced, may, without much presumption, be regarded as very questionable. Mingled with many things that must command assent ; some of them universally recognised truisms ; others, propositions which have been established by the power of the human intellect, or to Christians by the authority of the Scriptures through many successive generations ; there are in this Discourse others of a very different description ; and four points in particular to which I would direct your notice as decidedly exceptionable. I think that it draws an unsound parallel between Jewish ceremonial duty and Christian virtue ; that it misapplies religious principle to

the enforcement of political submission; that it overrates egregiously the moral influence of exalted station; and that it misstates the royal conduct best adapted to promote the highest interests of the nation and of mankind. To these points in succession, I shall direct your attention.

The discourse begins with a description of the covenant made by King Josiah, in the name of the Jewish people, with the Lord their God. In the 34th chapter of the 2nd book of Chronicles, at the 31st verse, we are told "The King stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book." And the preacher soon afterwards remarks, that "the object of that proceeding was, to bind both King and people, by the formality of a public and united pledge, to the performance of their duty, as servants of the most high God. *Such also (he adds) is the purport and intent of this day's solemnity.*" Now there are two things which it is incumbent on the teachers of religion and morality to avoid confounding: they are, duty as it existed under the Jewish peculiarity, and virtue, or goodness, or excellence of character, as it arises from the application of Christian principles. We do not live under the Jewish dispensation, nor has that which now exists any peculiar affinity with it as relates to this matter. In Judaism, command was almost everything. In Christianity, command is scarcely anything. In Judaism, there was specific injunction for the performance of specific external acts, with appropriate sanctions of reward and punishment annexed. The object of Christianity, on the other hand, is to form *disposition*; to generate a state of pure and right feeling; to go at once to the root of all goodness, to cherish it there, and then to let its exterior demonstrations follow very much the peculiarities of individual constitutional tendencies. Consequently while the Jewish system appro-

priately employed that kind of public "pledge," covenant, bargain, as it were with the Deity, described in the Bishop's text, nothing can be less appropriate to, or less consistent with, the spirit of Christianity. The Jewish system was external, ceremonial, and exclusive. In the midst of the Bishop's unconditional laudations of the character of King Josiah; of laudations which would most naturally be understood as holding him up unreservedly as a model for modern imitation; it might surely have been adverted to, that a portion of the goodness and duty for which he was praised by the Jewish historians; was the fierce and sanguinary pursuit in which he engaged against those who followed an idolatrous form of worship. He not only overthrew the temples and destroyed the high places of Baal, but he sacrificed the priests upon their own altars; he took their lives unrelentingly, nay piously, by wholesale massacre, and burnt their bones upon their altars, for an eternal desecration. Now of this, as Jewish virtue, I have nothing to say; but if the individual in whose merits it stands most prominent be held up as a model for Christian rulers, why then it is a species of virtue against which one is bound to enter a solemn protest. The Roman Catholic system may be as idolatrous as was the worship of Baal, in the eyes of those by whom these commendations of King Josiah are put forth. The Hindoo worship, prevailing over a large portion of the British dominions, is clearly and essentially idolatrous: and yet the pursuit of a policy at all analogous to that of King Josiah with either the Catholic Priest or the Hindoo Brahmin, would scarcely be tolerated in these days, or held consistent with the safe exercise of the functions of regality. Nor is Christianity propitious to vows, pledges, covenants, of any description. They may have abounded in the practices of some classes of Christians, but in practising them they have scarcely been following the precepts or example of him whose name they bear. His admonition was to "swear not at all;" and in the cnume-

ration which he gives in illustration of that precept, it seems by no means unlikely that he had in view the different modes of binding themselves by ceremonial vows which were practised among the Jews. In proportion as we enter into the peculiar spirit of Christian morality; as we see that it consists in general moral principles, and in the culture of holy and beneficent dispositions, we shall be wary of committing ourselves by obligations of this sort to future and external acts. We shall not be forward to do it for ourselves, still less shall we feel at liberty to do it *for others*. Josiah made a covenant not only for himself but for the people, by which it seems the people held themselves bound; and a parallel is drawn between this and what took place on a recent occasion, and it is said "the people are called upon to witness this solemn pledge; to accept their lawful Sovereign as given them by God to rule over them; and to promise their obedience, affection, and respect." Now whatever may be thought of a promise of *obedience* in external actions, the promise of "*affection and respect*," that is to say the promise of a particular state of mind in reference to a particular individual, whatever may prove eventually to be the character and conduct of that individual, is one of the greatest absurdities which can be committed. It might as well be promised that in a given spot, on some given and remote future day, there shall be "a sunshine in the shady place." The phenomena which the combination of the elements may bring about, are not less subject to the control of man than the results of those varying elements which combine to make up his own constitution, and which will move on in their natural sequence of cause and effect beyond the reach of his previous volition; or in reference to which, if his volition is exercised, he may find that exercise producing wretchedness, where he anticipated from it only the happiest results. Promises and pledges have turned out ill from the time when Jephthah vowed to sacrifice the first living thing

that met him on his return from his expedition against the Ammonites, down to the last vote that an elector may have given against his conscience and his country, because he had bound himself by a previous pledge to a candidate, and left only the wretched alternative between private falsehood and public delinquency.

True religion and sound morality make no bargain with the Deity; and the morality or religion that attempt to do so, show themselves of a comparatively low, mean, and base description. In proportion as duties are understood, it is seen that they are interests. The work of the follower of Christ, the work of the enlightened moralist whatever religion may be associated with his morality, is not to do so much toil in the supposed service of God, in order that he may have a right to such and such wages. It is to cultivate the powers which belong to his moral constitution—it is to strive after their expansion until he achieve the full excellence of which his nature is capable—it is to hold on his course, finding that what has often been made repulsive, by being represented as an enforced obligation, is really attractive because it is his true interest, and when realised will constitute his highest happiness.

The next passage for comment, and which relates to the second point I mentioned, the application of religious principle to civil allegiance or submission, runs thus:—

“The forms of human polity may differ, according to the circumstances which lead to their institution in different societies of men: but to whatever hands the supreme administration of them is committed, *the authority, which makes them available to the ends of government, is derived from God.* The powers that be are ordained of Him, although the persons who exercise them be not of his appointment: and so it is, that while the sovereign of a country holds his office in virtue of the laws of man, he may assert his authority, and claim his appropriate honour in virtue of the laws of God. The diadem, which encircles the brow of royalty, may be

“ placed there by human hands, and after the letter of
“ human compacts: but *it bespeaks a majesty of a more*
“ *exalted and transcendant kind than any human agency*
“ *can confer.* As to the person who is entitled to our al-
“ legiance, man’s ordinances may be our guide; but the
“ right motive to loyal obedience is this, that the power,
“ which claims it, is of God.”

I apprehend, the learned preacher mis-states here the Apostolic doctrine concerning civil government. Both St. Peter and St. Paul assert, to those whom they addressed in their epistles, that the powers that be are of God—that all power is of God. But, to understand what they meant, we must advert to the circumstances under which they wrote, and the notions which they were endeavouring to counteract. The Jews continually brought calamities on themselves by their insubordination and their restlessness under the Roman authority. And their frequent insurrections were on no principle of political liberty; they were not connected with particular grievances from which they desired redress; but they were the result of a fanaticism, the prevailing tenet of which was, that the King who should rule over them must be one selected specially by the Deity, and by him anointed to that office. This divine right they did not find in the imperial lords of Rome, and hence they were continually trying to throw off their yoke. It is evident, that, with such a notion, the Jews could be peaceful subjects in no country whatever. It was a constant root of bitterness: a never-failing fountain of insubordination and disturbance. The ground which the Apostles took in opposition to it was, that all government is of God: that is to say, God as much sanctions that at which human reason arrives in the exercise of its faculties, those social arrangements which men frame for mutual protection, as he did the authority of the anointed Kings of Israel. They are *of God*, as he is the author of the social tendencies which lead to their formation; as much of God as the most preternatural in-

terposition ever recorded in order to give a sanction to some particular mode of authority, or to some particular person in its exercise. Evidently, therefore, this doctrine of the Apostles does not really teach any theory of divine right, or any peculiar influx of divine majesty on those who may be set apart for the exercise of the functions of royalty. Its universal affirmation is equivalent, or nearly, to an universal negation. It puts all governments on the same footing, as to divine authority, so long as they accomplish their social purposes. It allows them to rise as the wants and desires of men generate them, and it extends to all one common divine appointment, as everything is of divine appointment that is conducive to man's peace, security, well-being, and progress.

But there seems in the sermon to be an intimation of something more. The mysticism of this language—"it bespeaks a majesty of a more exalted and transcendent kind than any human agency can confer"—is not very easy to be penetrated. Is it meant, in the distinction between the power and the person, that certain political functions, as those of kingship, are of God, while the choice of the individual who exercises them may be left to human arrangement? How far is it meant to continue and extend this divine sanction? Are all gradations of authority to be regarded as of God, while the parties by whom they are exercised may be of royal, or popular appointment, or of their own appointment, if they have the power? We are left entirely at sea. If it be merely meant, that any who exercise supreme authority may claim this heavenly majesty as infused into their natures, why then it belonged, for a while at least, to the French Directory; it resides in the American Congress with its Senate and President; it belongs to the Citizens in General Assembly of the little Republic of San Marino; it is to be found every where; it is co-extensive with social institutions. But thus regarded, the grandiloquent phrase of the preacher evaporates entirely into a


smoke of words. We cannot but suppose a purpose; and to judge by general and obvious tendency that seems to be to connect a kind of superstitious feeling with the exercise of certain functions, with the enjoyment of certain titles, and to make religious principle restrain the common principles of human judgment, and prohibit our subjecting them to the tribunal of opinion. And that something of this sort was the object is confirmed by what follows:—

“ On the other hand, a recollection of this truth is the
“ only security for a right administration of that power,
“ according to the rules of equity and mercy. Those
“ princes, and those only, who remember from whom it
“ is derived, will bear in mind the purposes for which it
“ is given, and will discharge the duties of their high
“ office, as knowing them to be the duties of a sacred
“ trust.”

Here, all the rights of nations, all the power of the wisdom of a community to secure the interests of that community; all the responsibility of those who exercise the most momentous functions, are swept away, in order to substitute that slight and filmy, that mere cobweb hold upon appropriate conduct, which is to be derived from the religion and conscientiousness of the individual ruler. There is to be no hope, no security for good government, but the religious notion of the sovereign, that his or her power is of God. Nations have generally thought it expedient to hold some other security. They have done well and wisely in not committing their important interests to a tenure so frail as this. It is not the fact of any government on the face of the earth, that this is the *only* security; assuredly it is not the fact with our own. Wherever there is representation, in the suffrages of the people is a better security. Wherever there is a free press, in the exercise of public opinion is a better security. Nay, even in the most simple forms of des-

potism, there is a better security in the apprehension of popular tumult or of military insurrection.

The third point which I mentioned, was an exaggerated view of the influence of worldly station upon the best interests of mankind. We are told of its being amongst the functions of royalty, "to diffuse, from their dazzling, but fearful eminence, a salutary and purifying light over the whole range of society;" and the preacher says, "we are bound to tell them (those who possess regal authority) that if God has done more for *them*, as to worldly things, than for the rest of mankind, they are thereby *enabled*, and will be expected, *to do more for HIM!*" More for Him! To do more for God! What is there that all the regality that ever existed on the face of the earth, can do for God? What more for Him can be done by the monarch in the plenitude of his power, by the statesman in the exercise of legislative authority, by the warrior at the head of conquering armies, or by priests and pontiffs arrayed in all the pride of their sacerdotal grandeur, than by the humblest peasant that tills the soil, or by the mere inanimate dust, the sand that is scattered on the sea shore? There is something so presumptuous in the very phraseology, that we almost overlook the absurdity of connecting it with station rather than with intellectual and moral attainment. What is it that royalty can do, so circumscribed and limited as it is in this country? It cannot substitute truth for falsehood, nor, permanently, falsehood for truth. Its influence extends only to superficialities. It may relax or it may tighten the bonds of etiquette. It may either permit a free or impose a constrained mode of intercourse; that is, it may elevate laxity or hypocrisy of manners. It may give the advantage of fashion to this or that school of art or species of amusement; and it may attract, by the love of show, and the desire of consorting with high society, even to one mode or form of worship rather than another,



and give the Athanasian Creed or the Apostles Creed its preponderance, in the parrot-like repetition of the lips when the words uttered sink not into the heart: but scarcely more than this can it accomplish. And then comes a Successor of different tastes; and the scene shifts as in a Theatre. The real sources of "salutary and purifying light," the true agents of the power that penetrates "through the entire frame of society," are those whom God anoints with regality of mind, whom he endows with authority over the souls of others; who dissipate the difficulties of Science, and enlarge the domains of Knowledge; who build up the palace of Intellect, exalt the spirit of Art, and wield the golden sceptre of Poetry, lay bare the foundations of Politics and Morals, and herald while they impel the onward progress of humanity. Not that they ever dream, or that Apostles and Prophets ever dreamed, of doing anything for God. To do something for his creature man, is the highest aim they propose to themselves; and by following out that aim, by their discoveries, reasonings, inventions, and the exercise of the mighty faculties with which heaven has endowed them, they fulfil the mission given them, perhaps to pass unpraised away, leaving it to the vanity of station, or the sycophancy of its adulators, to talk of doing anything for God.

I shall only further remark on the summary which is given towards the close of this discourse of the duties of of royalty, and of the results to be expected from their discharge.

"The Word of God, and the history of his providential government, warrant the conclusion, that Religion is the true secret of national happiness and honour; and the religious state of every country must be greatly influenced by the religion of its rulers. *Them that honour me, saith the Lord, I will honour.* A steady adherence to the true faith; a determined upholding of that Church which is its depositary and dispenser; a devout use of all its means of grace; a living exemplifi-

“ cation of its holy precepts ; will bring down upon God’s
 “ anointed Servant an abundant measure of his blessing ;
 “ will ensure to her (and nothing else can ensure it) a
 “ nation’s abiding loyalty and love ; and will revive, with
 “ augmented lustre, under his protection, the ancient, but
 “ not forgotten glories of a female reign ; the glories, not
 “ of outward magnificence, nor of successful war, nor
 “ of enlarged dominion : but the peaceful and durable
 “ glories of internal improvement and stability,—faction
 “ extinguished ; dissensions healed ; commerce extended ;
 “ learning and the arts encouraged ; the Church reformed
 “ and strengthened ; the pure Gospel preached to all the
 “ people of the land ; and the consequent growth of every
 “ thing that *is lovely and of good report.*”

Mark here the four cardinal virtues of a royal personage—virtues which are placed on the same level, and taken as constituting altogether the perfection of royal character. “ A steady adherence to the true faith ; a
 “ determined upholding of that Church which is its depositary and dispenser ; a devout use of all its means of
 “ grace ; a living exemplification of its holy precepts.” Holy life comes in as a fourth part of the moral excellence of royalty, being sorely jostled by adhesion to the Thirty-nine Articles of the orthodox creed, by the determined support of the church establishment, and by the continuous observance of the external rites and ceremonies enjoined by the Church, and described as “ means of grace.” What can we say of a moral system which places all these modes of action on the same level ; which classes them together ; which constitutes them the primary virtues of a character ; and on that whole character, so developed, pronounces the blessing of God ? This strange commingling, on terms of perfect parity, of a holy life with pertinacity in belief that *to be* belief must be involuntary, with a state policy in Ecclesiastical matters most questionable, and with ceremonial punctiliousness in which there can be no inherent worth, though

there is ever great danger of its substitution for that which has ; indicates a lamentable ignorance of anything like Christian virtue or pure religion, and an utter confusion of the very elements of morality. And for the Deity, indeed, as to his blessing on such a course, we may apply the rebuke which the novelist makes Richard bestow on the Friar, in Sherwood Forest, when he declared he could answer for his patron saint. "Answer for thyself, priest!" Though surely the presumption of the friar of old, in answering for his saint, was of a lower pitch than that of the modern bishop, in affecting to answer for the Deity.

It is promised that this strange quartette of virtues shall ensure not only God's blessing, but "a nation's abiding loyalty and love." The one assurance is as rash as the other; for, as it seems by no means clear that God's blessing is to be bargained for in the manner proposed, so neither would a nation's loyalty and love be retained without some material addition to, and modification of, the royal attributes of excellence enumerated by the Preacher: for the Sovereign might possess them in the highest degree, and yet be found miserably wanting in what the state of the country, and the spirit of the age imperatively demand; might allow one class to tyrannise over another class, nay, to tax its very bread; might obstinately deny political existence, when called for by the extension of intelligence and principle; and, on many other accounts, instead of "abiding loyalty and love," only become the object of sullen indifference or of deep aversion.

Nor is the example of Queen Elizabeth, here referred to, altogether so appropriate as to deserve the frequency with which it has been introduced. The greatest glory of Elizabeth's reign is silently passed over; namely, the rightful position into which this country was put by her policy in relation to the rest of Europe; its connexion with the struggling in every land for reformation, which

was then the struggle for mental as well as political freedom; the sympathy which her government ever manifested with the oppressed against the oppressor, whatever might be the power of the tyranny, in whatever region and under whatever forms it might be exercised. It was eminently during her reign that England took that high and noble position, and thus exercised its prerogative of "teaching the nations how to live." "Learning and the Arts," the intellectual splendours of the Elizabethan era, were not the result of her policy: they were glories not given by her but reflected upon her; they were the result of the recent emancipation of the human intellect from spiritual despotism, and of the revival of classical literature, with all its rich stores of thought and feeling that had been so long buried in a darkness deep as that of the grave. They were a blaze of glory that surrounded her policy indeed, but of which that policy was not the fountain. As to the rest there may be some question whether, completely as the energy of the Tudor Queen brought the country beneath her feet—whether such a mode of extinguishing faction and healing dissension is altogether to be desired. It did prevail; it lasted through her own reign, but it lasted very little longer. The strong coercion which Elizabeth exercised led to the revulsion of the great rebellion: the arbitrary principles which, in consequence of the men by whom she was surrounded and the energy of her character, she was able practically to realise, by their very reaction produced the fanaticism of the Puritans: the general desire of political right was extending and deepening itself in men's minds throughout the country, and as soon as her coercive power was relaxed by the hand of death, the elements of discord and confusion began to show themselves, and from clamour advanced to conflict, and conflict brought on that catastrophe which shook the altar and the throne to their foundation. Were natural phenomena always to typify mental processes, or political results, the head of Charles would

have rolled to the base of the statue of Elizabeth. There was already one royal and lovely head upon its pedestal.

Imitation of such a model as this, is about as questionable as that of King Josiah. The change of the times, the advance of opinion, all call for the adoption of different modes and for the exercise of power upon different principles; nor is it, as I have already remarked, by anything which royalty can achieve personally, that the improvement of a nation is to be secured. That must be done by laws, wise, just, humane, and beneficent in their operation; by institutions, adapted to the claims of humanity, embracing all classes, overthrowing old feudal distinctions and notions that, whatever their temporary benefit, have long since been outworn and wrought only mischief, degradation, and wretchedness: by a literature, freed from the pressure of arbitrary restrictions, and rendered as independent as possible of the influence of classes or of sordid interests: and by gradually diffusing notions of morality, which lead us to identify it with human nature in its highest state of excellence on the one hand, and with the strictest calculations of utilitarianism on the other. When this is done, it may then indeed appear that religion is, as here said, "the true secret of national happiness and honour;" but it is such a religion as royalty cannot command; such a religion, as established churches and established priesthoods may labour in vain to generate; such a religion, as no laws can fence nor distinctions, privations, or penalties sustain: not the superstition, the base and grovelling superstition, which is kept up by the performance of ceremonies in which no faith is placed: not the misdirection of that veneration which is so natural and so wholesome to man, from mental and moral qualities, from loftiness of character, to mere loftiness of station: but a religion which is the result of enlightenment; a religion which associates itself with growing views of the beauty and harmony, the wisdom and certainty of the great providential plan under which

we live; a religion which will not fail to be found, which even if not previously implanted, will spontaneously grow, in the soil of the highest civilization: and that when it abounds will make or preserve a people free, brave, and generous, teaching them to consult, in all their arrangements, whether social or individual, only the greatest amount of good to all. The blessings of such a Religion, enriching the Nation with the largest immediate enjoyment in combination with the brightest prospects, may Providence enable this country to realise during the reign of Queen Victoria.

FINSBURY LECTURES.

REPORTS OF LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE
CHAPEL IN SOUTH PLACE, FINSBURY,
BY W. J. FOX.

No. I.

THE MORALITY OF POVERTY.

(THE FIRST OF A COURSE ON "MORALITY AS MODIFIED BY THE
VARIOUS CLASSES INTO WHICH SOCIETY IS DIVIDED.")

LONDON:

CHARLES FOX, 67, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCXXXV.

THOMAS CURSON HANBARD, PATER-NOSTER-ROW.



P R E F A C E.

This Lecture is, as the reader will perceive, the first of a Series which is now in course of delivery, and the publisher's purpose is, that it should be followed by the remainder of that Series, and from time to time by others. Being composed extemporaneously as delivered, and printed from the reporter's notes, they will doubtless have very many and very obvious literary defects ; but numerous avocations leave only the alternative of bringing them out in this manner, or not at all. To furnish useful memoranda for the auditors ; to preclude misrepresentation, to which former lectures have been subjected ; and to realize more extensively the Lecturer's aim, of stimulating thought to exercise upon topics of great practical importance, are the views with which their publication is commenced.

November 23, 1835.

CLASS MORALITY.

LIST OF SUBJECTS IN THE COURSE OF "LECTURES ON MORALITY AS
MODIFIED BY THE VARIOUS CLASSES INTO WHICH
SOCIETY IS DIVIDED."

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THE MORALITY OF POVERTY.

IF Morality be rightly described as the means, or the art or science of happiness (and that different views of it are accurately defined by these expressions I have repeatedly endeavoured to show, and shall assume on the present occasion), it follows, as a necessary consequence, that it must be the most comprehensive of all arts and of all sciences—that, in fact, it must include whatever comes under those denominations, and claims the attributes of that highest wisdom which consists in the appropriate application of efficient means to the most important of all ends.

In this view, Morality may be properly said to include whatever advances us in the knowledge of the laws of material nature, of the mind, or of social man. It includes whatever principles the natural philosopher can arrive at by the classification of his accumulated facts; whatever truths the metaphysician may detect by his more recondite researches; whatever the statesman can attain of political science, from the teachings of history, or the results of his own experience and observation; the right application of whatever mechanical machinery may be employed by the manufacturer in the production of the necessaries or the conveniencies of life; and whatever mental machinery may be employed by the teacher in the fabrication of intelligence and of character. They all come under this one head—Morality; for they are all capable of supplying means that

may be employed for the production, the multiplication, the perpetuation of human happiness.

And yet, although this science be so comprehensive, although it be so inclusive of all things else, in practice it has too commonly been neglected. Instead of embracing them all, it has been distinguished from them all, both theoretically and practically. Men have been particularly prone to dis sever it from that which is most immediately connected with their own interest; the very direction in which they ought to have endeavoured to preserve its union. They have inculcated morality upon others to regulate their behaviour towards themselves; but the tradesman has been disposed to tell us that the counting-house or the shop is free from the intrusion of this principle, practically so disposed at least; legislators and rulers have held themselves the administrators of law, or the promoters of certain schemes of policy, but have told the inhabitants of the country, to regard their private morality as something very distinct from these. Nay, even our religionists, divines, have rested in ceremony, creed, and dogma; and have put these forward, with only perhaps the cold repetition of the decalogue, as that by which men's minds were to be made wise unto salvation. There is too often the power of a sinister interest over the members of different classes, which leads them to a deflection from the true standard of morality, and which disposes them to reduce its importance, and circumscribe its boundaries: nay, there is something in the bearing of the circumstances themselves in which different sets of men are placed, that may, and must lead them unwarily, unconsciously, to different views on this great matter from those which are taken by others who are exposed to opposite influences.

It is, therefore, a most desirable work, I think, to endeavour to ascertain the nature, the direction, and the extent of these influences on the most important of the classes into which society is distributed; to one or other

of which classes the great majority of an assembly like this may be supposed to belong ; or to which, if they do not belong, they may yet bear such affinities as shall render it desirable for them to make this a matter of consideration : it is desirable to bring the tendencies and results of such influences into a fair and full comparison with the eternal principles of morality.

Let not this phrase be misunderstood. I say the eternal principles of morality—not its unchangeable details. The principles of morality are ever the same, because they are based in the constitution of our nature. The catalogue of duties is subject to constant change ; with the difference of country, with the difference of period, with the difference of age, of sex, and of various other relations. That will be obligatory on one, by the very same principle, which is not obligatory on another. New duties arise with the changes of men's civil and political relations. That may be sacredly incumbent on the modern European, which was no duty at all to the ancient Asiatic. That may be one of the most binding obligations on the Englishman of the nineteenth century, which would have no place in the list of precepts comprehending the duties of the Jew in the first century. The conduct may be useful and moral in one portion of the globe, in consequence of some peculiarity of political institution or social relation, which in another would only be productive of mischief, and which would, therefore, belong to the category of vice, and not of virtue.

I say the unchanging principles of morality—not the uniformity of its exhibition, or of its inculcation. The mode of illustrating and enforcing moral obligation must be subject to change, as well as the details of duty, and for similar reasons. It must be connected with the prevalent modes of thought, of feeling, and of social intercourse, that prevail at any given time, or in any given country. There have been three great teachers of the utilitarian theory of morality, and they have been remarkably dis-

tinguished by the spirit in which they have taught it, as well as by other circumstances: I allude to Socrates, to Bentham, and to Jesus Christ. The first inculcated it as a rational and logical theory; the second inculcated it as a matter of practical calculation; the last based it upon that sympathy which belongs to human nature: and while the one might be a fitting teacher for the speculative minds of ancient Greece; while the other might be an appropriate teacher for the calculators—the continual calculators of modern times, and eminently of this commercial country; the injunctions of the Christ, resting on sympathy, appeal to universal humanity, and enforce upon us the pursuit of the best, the only rational and consistent doctrine of morals, in that way which gives it the firmest grasp upon the heart—the heart of all men—the universal human heart—and, consequently, the greatest power over human life and human happiness.

Capable of being traced back to such principles, connected with such a boundless diversity of results, and distinguished by such beneficence of character, as this theory is, let no one mistake the mode of inculcating and applying it, which I have been led to adopt. Let no one suppose, that in these Lectures, referring as they do to all classes—commencing with the poor, adverting then to the rich, then to the mercantile and middle classes; then taking the various occupations of arms, of the law, of the press, and ending with the clerical profession; let no one suppose, that in these Lectures I am meditating, or shall make, an attack upon any persons, or any class. Far, indeed, from my mind is any such purpose; and instead of being a fitting vehicle for the purpose of vituperation, I take it that these Lectures will furnish one great lesson for all—a lesson of charity. And there is no charity like an enlightened beneficence, which analyzes the causes that act upon men, and traces the different ways in which influences, from within and

without, fashion our thoughts and pursuits. Thus to arrive at a knowledge of the various operations that build man up into what he is, must dispose us, far more than any other species of training that can possibly be imagined, to regard all with kindness; to extend sympathy to the utmost bounds to which sympathy can possibly be felt; and to look onward with hope and trust to the future evolutions of that nature, which is already so beautiful and so worthy an object of complacency, even in the midst of its darkest aberrations.

Nor let any one say, that, not feeling himself identified with this or that particular class, these lessons have for him no moral, and are unconnected with his own particular improvement. I say again, that they must, in their spirit and tendency, contain a lesson for all; not only such as I have just described, the purest and best of all lessons, that of universal charity; but also this, which any one of you, which any man whatever, may learn—namely, to estimate the temptations of his own state. For if while I describe poverty as tending to comparative disregard of property, any should say, “What have I to do with this? I am neither poor nor in danger of poverty;” I would reply, Look a little further into the matter; have not you temptations as well as the poor, to aggression, to extortion, to an injustice which is not the less so because it may be perhaps a legal injustice? and if you find this acting on your mind, then you have to do with the exposition which I make, and may learn from it how far more culpable in your own case is such an overstepping of the boundaries of moral honesty, than it is in others who are exposed to much harder trials, and subjected to far more pernicious influences.

The same remark will apply to a review of the circumstances and moral condition of any class. Should it be shown, with reference to the legal or the clerical profession, that there is in these a tendency to insincerity, let none turn away, and say, “I have nothing to do with this.” For if his

own tongue, or his own actions, have ever failed of being the faithful expositors of his thoughts and feelings, he has to do with it; and in the influences which operate upon others, he may read a lesson of caution for himself, and start back from a result which he might not be aware that he was approaching, but towards which, seeing others advancing in a different, and it may be, a broader highway, he may be led to look more closely to the crooked paths wherein his own feet have been entrapped.

It is, then, desirable for each and all, that we should endeavour to estimate fairly and impartially the diversified action of circumstances upon ourselves and our fellow-creatures, comparing them with the true description of morality, namely, that it is that which tends to the production of happiness, the greatest happiness of the greatest number—the greatest amount of happiness, the most satisfactory, and the most enduring species of enjoyment.

With regard to the poor, I shall distribute this inquiry under three heads:—The unfavourable influences which operate upon them; the favourable influences which, in some degree, counteract these; and the means and consequent prospect of improvement which open upon us.

The first and most unfavourable circumstance in connexion with poverty is, that it must be considered generally as a state of ignorance. However ignorance may be called the mother of devotion, ignorance is not the parent of morality. Ignorance—moral ignorance—there is in all classes, and that to an extent which it is most painful to contemplate. We find those who have accumulated many sciences, and yet who know nothing of this best science; many who can speak various languages, yet know nothing of that language which it is most important that even the infant should be taught to lisp almost in its very cradle. Even the professed teachers of religion and morality too often show a lamentable want of perception, either of the extent of the great

principles on which it is founded, or the mode in which those principles should be applied to the present condition of society. But ignorance must needs abound much more—ignorance in reference even to this matter—as we come to the lowest classes of society, because there is that deficiency of general information which co-operates with ignorance as to the particular subject, and renders more deep and intense the darkness of the soul. All vice has been traced to ignorance; the foulest guilt is so ascribed by the great Author of the Christian religion in that memorable prayer, by which he supplicated forgiveness for his murderers, because they knew not what they did. It is the universal character of the wicked man; he is, whatever his acquirements in other respects, in a state of ignorance on this point; he knows not what he does; he mistakes either that in which happiness consists, or the mode in which happiness is to be realized. And fearfully must the chances of such mistakes be multiplied as we come to that class of society which is the most deprived of the manifold means of information that surround others from their early years, and that thicken and multiply upon them as they advance towards maturity in society. For many there are, especially in the rural districts of this country, that have not even the mere mechanism of knowledge; they do not even write and read;—a proportion, the extent of which was fearfully brought out by the trials which took place a few years back in consequence of the spread of incendiarism. How many there are to whom these qualifications are but of little worth, only serving them for an occasional aid, and that of the most paltry kind, in their daily application and toil, just enabling them to decipher the direction of the parcel which they have to bear to its destination! How many there are who, learning to read and write, have no means of exercising the capacity which has been imparted, in whom it

dwindles and withers because books are not within their reach, nor the various means of information that are possessed by others! And when we consider the wretched quality, and the limited extent of the education which is bestowed on the children of the great mass of the community, we are left in the dreary contemplation of a wide waste of untilled mind, overgrown with weeds, and left in mist and gloom, where the light of knowledge might have arisen, and every fairest production of the soil have blossomed and ripened beneath its beams.

The results of this ignorance are vice. Whatever tends to suffering, whatever limits enjoyment, is vice. It is from a lack of morality that the poor do not make the most of those means which they do possess for obtaining the necessaries, and some of the comforts, of life. All projects of an union of labour, of co-operation for production, are pressed upon by difficulties which do not at all obstruct co-operation in expenditure. What might not be done by the combination of twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty honest, however poor, families. What a multiplication might there be, by their judicious co-operation, of all the means of shelter, of warmth, and the supply of food, and of clothing. How much better in every respect—better in cleanliness, better in enjoyment, better in the training of their children, better in their own bodily sensations, and even their moral state, from day to day, might they not be even by the union of the scanty pittances which they do possess, and the power of which would be increased to such an indefinite extent by this mode of co-operation! What prevents it? What but ignorance, which, in this view, leads to the loss of happiness which might be realized, to the enduring of sufferings which might be prevented, and which, therefore, bears the character of vice and immorality.

So, again, to what but ignorance can be ascribed that blind desire to aid themselves by acts of violence on the

property of others which has sometimes been manifested, and which, beyond the actual perpetration, or even the approval or palliation of violence, has extended itself in a direction of opinion and feeling that is most deeply to be lamented? It is the result of ignorance that they think of bettering their condition by a mode that could only make that condition worse, and aggravate ten-fold—a thousand-fold—whatever of endurance they are at present exposed to. The notions which so closely connect in their minds the invention and application of machinery with their own distress, are amongst the results of a want of knowledge most devoutly to be deprecated. Could the machinery of this country be by one stroke of a giant arm annihilated, what tongue can tell the results, the tremendous results of misery that would instantly be realized? Earth has never yet seen; no siege of a city, however protracted; no war, however bloody and desolating; no revolution, however wild and ferocious, has ever shown a parallel for the misery that would instantly descend upon the heads of millions could any such idea be realized. The means, not only of clothing, but of food and of migration, would instantly fail us; we should be shut up from the rest of the world; we should be reduced into a state in which it would not be strange if even cannibalism were to ensue. The hostility to machinery, to be consistent, must be universal. Each class of workmen has the same right; and if the agricultural labourer be justifiable in destroying the threshing machine, the weaver has a right to destroy the power loom; the printers' pressmen would be right in destroying the steam press; the waterman would be right in dismantling the steam vessel; and so, throughout the whole compass of society, we should be thrown back into a state of privation, helplessness, and utter barbarism.

It is one of the most deplorable results of ignorance, that any such notion should be entertained, and that it

has not been seen in what way the amelioration of the condition of the operative classes is to be advanced (and this advance ought to be the object of all philanthropists, of all statesmen, of all moralists), in connexion with the continually increasing employment, and not by the disuse, of that machinery which is as the multiplication of human thought and power.

So we ascribe to ignorance that mis-direction, or that non-regulation of the feelings and passions of a man's own breast; the irritation of his conduct towards others, generating similar annoyance towards himself, and keeping up that wretched reaction of needless suffering which is so often to be found in dwellings that might become scenes of mutual affection and enjoyment. It is from want of acquaintance with himself—from want of the habit of analyzing his own motives, and the tendency of his own words and deeds, that a man is led to the indulgence of anger; to the cherishing of vindictiveness; to a blindness to the means, the many means, by which one kind heart may alleviate the sorrows, and increase and strengthen the enjoyment of another kind heart; and by which even the dreariest hovel may be made the abode of peace, of the peace of God. It is from the same cause that men are led to low and brutal means of enjoying themselves—to enjoyments which one can scarcely bear to designate by that name; that lower the nature of man towards the brute, and that go to the destruction not only of all comfort, but of all morality, and of all intelligence even. These are the fruits, the pernicious fruits, that ignorance has been bearing from age to age.

Another unfavourable circumstance is, the pressure of want. In extreme cases, the operation of this is much the same upon all classes. The most educated man is a savage under the pangs of continued hunger. A boat full of philosophers turned adrift on the Atlantic for a week, without any stock of provisions, would feel at length

something like the longings of the cannibal arise in their bosoms. But if, in extreme cases, such is the effect on the best instructed, how wearying, how irritating, how destructive of whatever is beautiful and good, must be the continual pinching and stinting from day to day to which so many thousands, uneducated thousands, in this city, and in this country, are necessarily subjected! The constantly finding the meal come short of the desires, of the craving desires, of the family—the continually having to submit to sensations which in their continuation are torture—what can this produce but irritation, ceaseless irritation, tending to the destruction of every feeling of gentleness and kindness, and sometimes aggravated into the darkest emotions of which the human frame is capable. What must it be where these sensations are felt in the midst of external plenty—where he who is craving for want, sees the golden fields stretching around him in all the richness and beauty of autumn, bending to the sickle, and inviting the reaper, and promising the largest accumulations to the stores of those in whom is vested the possession of the land? We are told, that sometimes in Ireland whole districts have been reduced to the very lowest state of existence; and while they have been on the brink of starvation, while they have even been glad to stop the craving of their stomachs with sea-weed, or with any unnutritious diet, that may have been thrown in their way—that even at this moment their ships have been loading with wheat to be exported to other countries, and cattle have been driven through ranks, through staring and starving ranks of peasantry, in order to be sold and sent to other lands. All this may be unavoidable in certain conjunctures, as things are at present ordered, but it exhibits a condition of humanity fruitful in moral mischief of the worst description. Such a state of misery at once indicates a cause, and furnishes a palliation that must reach every heart, for whatever species of vice those subjected to it may unhappily plunge into.

Another unfavourable circumstance continually operating on poverty, is the sense of inferiority—a deep sense of inferiority unconnected with that respect for others which makes inferiority not painfully felt. There is no more holy or moral principle of the human mind than reverence. The philosopher who told his pupil to own no superior in the world but the God who made the world, gave him, in my judgment, an erroneous lesson. That he was right in the exception, is an indication that he was wrong in the rule. By the same reason that it is good for us to look up reverentially to a Being who is infinitely exalted above all humanity, it is good for us also to look up to, appreciate, and feel reverence for, whatever is great and glorious in human nature, for whatever has been displayed of wisdom and moral grandeur by individuals.

But in contrast with the beneficent operation on the greatest minds, of that reverence which they have ever been foremost to indulge, tracing in others a greatness beyond their own, whether in the same, or some other sphere of mind or morals, is the feeling of servility, or the sense of inferiority in the mind which does not see superior wisdom, which does not trace superior worth, which does not associate mental or moral qualities with their condition, who yet, by virtue of that condition, are raised above them, and are their superiors, if not their masters. The condition of a man existing in one of the subordinate castes of the East must be considered as unfavourable to morality. He looks around him, and sees, in every direction, men living in comparative ease and on the resources of others, whilst he himself is subjected to the same toil in which his father dragged through life before him, and in which his sons must drag through life after him. And though we are told that in this country any man may better his condition—that there is here no distinction of caste—that any man may rise in life—yet it is to be remembered that rising in the world is too often a process which does not tend to disarm the immoral

tendency in question, but, on the contrary, gives it greater strength, being accomplished by means of the very servility which is the curse of ignorance and poverty in their degradation; and if so, it carries a blight along with it into the ranks which are above, and spreads through them all either a false estimate of worth, or a conscious and base postponement of moral good to external appearance, which ought only to be found, and there is only to be deplored, in those whose situation is of the most abject description.

Must it not be traced to the operation of some of the causes which have been mentioned, perhaps in some degree to the influence of all conjointly, that in some classes of the poor of this country, natural feeling has been triumphed over in a way that deserves our reprobation, and which should be a stimulus to every philanthropic mind to endeavour to produce a different state of things? I allude to that dictate of ignorance, that pressure of want, or that demonstration of inferiority, by any one of which, or by all of which, so many of the poor, especially in the northern counties of this kingdom, are led to bargain for the labour, for the continued, the depressing, the exhausting labour of their wives, and of their children. For, whatever may be said of the hardness of overseers, or of the tyranny of masters, the plain fact is, in the case of a woman or child being consigned to such labour, that they are sold to it by the husband or by the father—sold to it, it may be, and assuredly it generally is, under the biting pressure of want, a pressure which is felt most severely by him and by all from day to day: but still that does not change the character of the transaction; that can only be traced either to a tyranny that becomes the savage, or to a want that ought not to be experienced, that ought not to be allowed, within the regions of civilized life. It was justly said by Mr. Cobbett, that the Factory Bill was a bill for the protection of children

against their parents; and most deplorable is it that any child, at least under ten or twelve years of age, should be allowed to work, or any woman to work at all in such a way. Still more deplorable is it that this should be by the will, though it be the hardly extorted will, of the parent, in whom the very name and attributes of humanity are thus degraded; and who, as knowledge and feeling open in upon his mind, must blush at such a record of the past, and regard it as one of the darkest blots that has ever been stamped upon the surface of humanity. Society ought in such a case assuredly to interpose, and at whatever cost to all or to any, it should declare in an imperative tone, declare with a voice of thunder, that this shall not be; the season of tender youth, or the inferior strength of woman, shall not be so applied. Let the one perform the lighter duties that naturally fall to her share; let the other be at their proper post of instruction; and whatever may be said to be the false political economy of the measure, whatever may be said to be the injury to any of the commercial interests of the country, there are the paramount interests of humanity above all. Children shall not be so tasked, parental feeling shall be shielded from such revulsion.

Another unfavourable circumstance is, that the poor are eminently subjected to the influence of other classes. There exists amongst themselves a class of demoralized paupers, living in comparative idleness, and often living and thriving better than the most hardy industry. There exists amongst them a class of dishonest persons; for thieving appears in our day to be rather a profession, than a violation of the law to which honest but poor men are tempted by the pressure of necessity. They have continually before their eyes these classes of people, doing better than themselves, having more abundant fare, and of a better quality; what wonder if, with minds unformed by instruc-

tion, they sometimes approximate towards the one or the other, and overpass the boundaries of a strict integrity. They are subjected to the influence of politicians. If war is to be waged, their passions are to be stimulated; their ignorance is to be misled; their poverty is to be bribed; their bodies and their consciences are to be bought; and they are to be made the living machinery of shedding those torrents of blood, which ambition, or any other evil disposition, may will should flow to drench and desolate the earth. If political bigotry wants a victim, they are to be excited to acts of riot, and then turned loose, often to destroy the property and to endanger the lives of the very best of men, and of their noblest benefactors. And so, on the other hand, there are acting on them the influences of those, who, on their heads, would rise to personal emolument and advantage: the political demagogue, who tells them of all sorts of golden prospects, and by the most absurd means ventures to assure to them the realization of blessings, which may be far beyond their reach by any means, but which assuredly can never be achieved by any panacea in his possession. All bear on the poor, all are continually operating on their ignorance, and perverting their minds. The bigot addresses himself to them, in order to strengthen his bigotry; to give the spirit of sectarianism more power; to roll its thunders with a louder crash against those whom he denominates heretics; and to dart his lightnings with a clearer and more fatal aim. Even the philanthropist very often makes their condition worse, and aggravates their sufferings by a misdirected charity, which increases the evil it endeavours to alleviate; and thus, what is meant for their good, is continually perverted for their evil. Even religion, as presented to them, often assumes the character of darkness and of gloom, adding to all their other apprehensions, while it ought only to approach them as an angel of light, guiding them to peace and to cheerfulness here, and pointing them to a better world hereafter.

O, how strong is humanity! What a grand, what a majestic thing is that constitution of sentient nature, which does not break down under all this suffering; which manifests its tendency, which breathes its aspirations, which shows its origin from the Father of truth and light and goodness, even amidst all the clouds that time and circumstances cause to brood over it, and dim its brightness! For so it is, that in the favourable circumstances of poverty, we must advert first to the native tendencies of humanity. They are often displaying themselves with a power which shows their beneficent and their everlasting nature. Rightly has the most philosophic of living poets declared, that

“Man is dear to man. The poorest poor
Long for some moments in a weary life
When they may know and feel that they have been
Themselves the givers and the dealers out
Of some small blessings, have been kind to those
Who needed kindness, for this single cause,—
That we have, all of us, ONE HUMAN HEART.”

There is the great source of strength and hope, in that universal oneness of the human heart; there is the origin of what is justly denominated natural sympathy, the craving for it from others, and the innate propulsion towards its exercise in every individual; there is the great pledge which man gives to man, and which God gives to man, that so long as our nature is continued in existence, manifestations of goodness shall not be wanting to vindicate its moral dignity, and eventually its happy destiny.

Another favourable circumstance is the comparative self-dependence of poverty. For children in other ranks everything is done; amidst all the lessons that are taught them, there is too commonly a neglect of the most important lesson that a human being can learn, and that is, how to help himself; everything is done for them: whilst, on the other hand, the child of poverty must speedily learn that

most things are to be done by him for himself. And hence, as he grows up, and his mind haply takes a good direction, all moral qualities acquire peculiar energy and firmness. This very feeling of self-dependence generates power; the power of acquiring knowledge; the power of adding one acquisition of information to another acquisition of information; the power of exercising more and more clearly the reasoning faculties with which he is invested; the power of turning more and more to account the different circumstances by which he is surrounded. And as his character unfolds itself, there is this addition to every attribute—that it is not as a reed shaken with the wind; that it is not as a chance production having no deep root, nor strength of stem, which any passing foot may trample in the dust, and crush for ever; but has the quality of strength, and with that the property of endurance, so that all is compacted with a solidity which seems to scorn the boast of ancient genius, that it was raising works on which the showers shall beat and the winds shall blow in vain, and which may defy the eating rust of time; for there is somewhat in it more enduring still, there is the strength of eternity in the moral virtues generated by poverty.

Another favourable circumstance is the stronger sympathy that is elicited by their own experience, or their closer observation of the extent of suffering that is endured; and the higher gratification of benevolence, when that benevolence has to be manifested, not by a mere pecuniary donation, but, as in their case, by personal assistance to the sufferer. That experience is essential, for the most efficient sympathy has always been remarked, and is true alike of all classes. Whatever may be the calamities which befall a man, he finds most eloquence in the tongues of those who have themselves endured similar disasters. “He talks to me who never had a child,” is the most scornful repulse of the bereaved parent, turning away from what seems to him the cold language of one who, never having been placed

in like circumstances, can have no conception of the agony of his bosom. And so it is with reference to all the calamities which afflict human life, and the mode in which those calamities can best be alleviated.

Now the poor are to other classes too often but as the inhabitants of a remote and unexplored country. Comparatively little can be realized, by the children of affluence, of their state who are exposed to the mischiefs which I have just enumerated, and to these mischiefs in combination with sickness—with protracted sickness—with bitter privations, and with the other ills which flesh is heir to, but which, in this combination, fall upon them with so much peculiar bitterness. There then springs up amongst themselves a sympathy which has been exercised to an extent that does them honour. Talk what we will of charity, and of kindness, the great alleviator of the sufferings of the poor is the sympathy of the poor. There are immense loads heaved off by this power, the pressure of which would defy any other interposition, and baffle all the philanthropy of those who are most active and most energetic in their philanthropy, but who do not belong to the class, to the good of which they earnestly desire to minister.

"I love," said Robert Robinson in one of his beautiful Village Sermons, "the soul that must and will do good; the kind creature, that runs to the sick bed, I might rather say bedstead, of a poor neighbour, wipes away the moisture of a fever, smooths the clothes, beats up the pillow, fills the pitcher, sets it within reach, administers only a cup of cold water; but in the true spirit of a disciple of Christ, becomes a fellow worker with Christ in the administration of happiness to mankind. Peace be with that good soul! She also must come in time into the condition of her neighbour; and then may the Lord strengthen her upon the bed of languishing, and by some kind hand like her own, make all her bed in her sickness."

Of genuine Christian goodness such as this, I have no doubt that there is a most honourable amount, constantly wearing away an immense mass of misery, unapproachable by any other class or in any other way. Conversing on the subject of this lecture with a friend, who himself was trained in the very poorest and lowest ranks of society, who long continued in them, who made his way gradually, by hard but ceaseless exertions, and a never slumbering prudence, to a more elevated condition of life, but without losing the principles, the sympathies, the feelings of his earlier state; he gave me the following testimony of his own experience and observation:—

“Every one who speaks about or writes about the ‘lower orders,’ adopts the cant of disorderly, dissolute, improvident, &c., and finds out, or takes for granted, all the vices or supposed vices of the working people, and for the acts of a few among them, condemns them all. None have any morality, much less any virtues. It is time that some, one at least should, do them justice, and show that they have morals and virtues of no ordinary cast.

“When I was clerk or secretary to several trade clubs, I saw perseverance among a great many of the worst paid, poorest workmen, unequalled among any other class to the same extent.

“I have seen many men toiling on continually, earning the very barest means of subsistence by unremitted labour, and with no enjoyments. I have seen such men go on, never relaxing though never in health, conscious that their means never could be increased, neither their families ever be adequately supplied; apprehensive of failing altogether to supply them even with food, yet drudging on in this hopeless state, unknown and unheeded, quiet and composed as they are miserable, doing no harm to any, and yet ready to advise and assist others in every way men so circumstanced were capable.

“These are moral people.

“And there are hundreds, probably thousands such, not only in London, but everywhere.

“But the women—in all such cases the women are in even a worse condition than the men; they have the care of the children, they are worn to the bone with breeding, nursing, care, anxiety, and privation. Yet it is not more remarkable than true, that with few exceptions they never give up in despair; so long as the man holds on the woman holds to him and the children, until she is destroyed; even in death she never wholly succumbs, but in the anguish of her heart, amidst all manner of doubts and terrible forebodings, hope that something good may happen to the children is scarcely ever wholly extinguished.”

“This is no loose sketch, but it is true to the letter, and is by far more common than they who are not intimately acquainted with the working people will ever believe.

“Are these people moral? Yes, they are according to their very limited means exemplarily moral.

“Their sympathies for persons similarly circumstanced with themselves, are continually shown among all from the very poorest upwards. It diminishes gradually as we approach those who can afford to hire, can command the services of others; among these a desire to some others, or a command to those whose services they can dispose of, enables them to shift actual exertion from themselves, and their sympathies evaporate in a wish or a lamentation which when once uttered are immediately forgotten.

“If the actually poor and those bordering on poverty did not assist one another, the misery, great as it is which exists among them, would be greatly increased. Their actual services to one another in innumerable cases, is altogether unparalleled; efforts are made which seem incredible; sacrifices are made, of which they who are well off have no sort of conception; trouble is taken—anxiety is endured—gifts are bestowed—privations are borne, with a readiness truly admirable.

“Is a neighbour sick with the most contagious disease, even they will nurse him or her.

“Has some particular misfortune fallen on some one?— they will take away the children for a time, and feed them from their own scanty means; and in proportion to those means, contribute in quantity and amount, as none but themselves ever do, or ever contemplate doing.”

In this list of influences I have only enumerated those which belong to poverty as it ordinarily exists, which may be almost regarded as a condition of the state itself. In adverting to the means and prospect of improvement, the last topic on which I was to touch, we must rather have reference to those which are peculiar, and which characterize the times and circumstances in which we live. I think that, while the last view of influences may teach us to correct the estimate which may be inferred from the former, this is of a description to brighten our hopes, and to animate our exertions.

The first circumstance which I think operated strongly to the amelioration of the condition of the poor in this country, was the rise of Methodism; and this was a heart-stirring influence. Whatever flaws a severe critic may find in the supposed aims, or real proceedings of John Wesley, there can be no doubt that he deserves to be classed amongst the benefactors, amongst the most illustrious benefactors of the people of this nation. Up to that time the poor seemed utterly below regard, except as they were made the means of answering some purpose or other for their betters; and while scarcely more than a mere animal existence was considered as their best condition, religious or intellectual instruction was never supposed to require a direction towards them, perhaps not thought capable of descending so low in the scale of society. They were in a state of the most deplorable ignorance that can be imagined, and with that, too generally, in a state of corresponding brutality. It was then that the religious principle impelled

so many men to appeal to them in a language which they understood. They were not invited to the repetition of heartless forms or of cold exhortations, and discussions of matters in which they could feel no concern : but whatever were the mysteries of the creed of John Wesley, or whatever irrational principles may have been inculcated by the sect which he established, their first great and good onset upon the poor was distinguished by this character, that it was a speaking from their own hearts, and to the hearts of those whom they addressed. It was an appeal that made tears, blessed tears, roll down many a hardened cheek. It was an appeal that made many a reprobate, falter in his course, and taught his tongue a holier language. It was an appeal which showed men that they had friends, and friends of mental and of moral power, who were placing a lever that would raise them in the scale of being, and give them something like spiritual perception and spiritual existence, enjoyment, and anticipation. And this good I believe that John Wesley and his followers did accomplish for the poor of this country.

I cannot extend the praise to the present condition of that community. I cannot regard the influences which it is now exercising as having retained their primitive brightness, or as worthy of being gazed upon with similar complacency. The obtrusive irrationality; the exercise of priestcraft to a large extent (for priestcraft may co-exist with the character of the humblest dissenting teacher as well as that of the most elevated episcopal or papal dignitary, and may have its throne in a barn as well as in a metropolitan temple), the exercise, I say, of priestcraft; the subjection of the minds of their hearers, which in their expansion have become capable of better things, to dogmas that cripple those minds; the ceaseless occupation of their proselytes with much that is very absurdly called spiritual, to the exclusion of topics of present concern, which should be brought home to their business and bosoms; and the affinity which has been

shown for despotism, both political and ecclesiastical, in their body, and for a church establishment which has become altogether unnational in its form and spirit; these indicate, that methodism is worn out as an auxiliary of any importance for ameliorating the condition of the great mass of the community.

A real religion of the people—a religion in the spirit of Christianity, with the modification to present circumstances which that spirit demands—a religion, simple, fervent, expansive, elevated as the spirit of Christ himself—this is needed; toward this, I trust, there is some tendency. Materials for it may, in some measure, be furnished here and there by the existing bodies of religionists, though their combination cannot be made available by the exertions and by the activity of sectarianism. The path must be by the road of national education, without which, no great or permanent good can be expected. I trust there is a tendency towards this; and that in each of the means I am indicating, there is also a self-inherent power of advance.

This is the case with the next I would mention—the effect of political thought and association upon the poorer classes. If methodism gave the first strong impulse to the intelligence of poverty, the Corresponding Society gave the second; and many a living member in the most respectable ranks of life in this metropolis and kingdom can bear witness, and does from time to time, and on every legitimate opportunity, bear witness to the wholesome effect of that society upon the mind and upon the morals of many young men connected with it, who became thereby capable of developing a judgment, a prudence, a forethought, a consistent integrity, and an unfailing perseverance, which there existed no rational probability of their acquiring in any other way, and which we can scarcely imagine they could have learnt in any school, which society in their own class, or the class above, could or would have opened for their reception.

Similar tendencies were exercised by the bodies formed in a more recent period—the Political Unions. The manner in which they brought together the different classes of society, tended to destroy that ignorance in which both existed; to commend each to the other's feelings; to demolish the artificial barriers which have kept out the light and heat that should circulate over the whole surface of humanity, and create brotherhood, where only had been suspicion or hostility. They also showed the way in which opinion may be fairly and legitimately acted upon. They showed the extent to which the poorer classes are teachable—the way in which erroneous impressions may be corrected, and the strongest prejudices abated. They showed that such a machinery had only to be properly directed to form one of the most efficient modes of raising men's minds to thoughtfulness, to knowledge, to foresight, and through these to whatever best deserves the name of morality. Nor was it, in my opinion, wise in those who were invested with authority, either to crush the first of these, or to discountenance the other; they better deserved cherishing, as one means of acting upon society through all its gradations for the most beneficent purposes, as one way of forming men for that which ultimately must be their inheritance—the universal rights of citizenship, and keeping up the union of power and knowledge—the union which most of all will not bear dis-severing—the union from which most of all we may anticipate good for mankind. And I think the tendency of the good which was elicited and cherished by these institutions is a growing tendency; I think it will result in limiting, and eventually destroying, much of that ignorance, of that want, of that servility, which we have been describing; that, investing men with the conscious dignity of political and civil existence, it will raise their thoughts to a sense of the moral dignity of their nature, so that not only will the peasant learn to “venerate himself as man,” but all will cherish a merited self-respect, the surest safeguard of whatever is

most excellent in humanity. The third means of improvement, and source of hope that such improvement will be realized, may be found in the extent to which education has been carried in the Mechanics' Institutes, and establishments of a similar description, and in the cheapness, the greatly increased and increasing cheapness of books of almost every description. I need not trace the history and progress (which must be familiar to most of you) of these different influences—the way in which they originated, and the steps by which they have advanced from their origin to their present degree of power. But I must say, that in each of them there is a drawback; that while education has been extended, and is extending, there is much indeed yet to desiderate in the quality of the instruction that is afforded, and in the numbers to which that instruction is communicated; and that while Mechanics' Institutes have done much good, they have not laid that extensive grasp on the operative classes which might have been desired and expected. They have made a great mistake in often excluding from any influential share of their management the class designed to be benefited, and without whose hearty co-operation it is not to be expected they should be either flourishing or useful. I lament also their exclusion of political and religious topics, which is equivalent, so far as it goes, to debarring the mind of man from embracing whatever is most important to its interest. To topics like these the human intellect, even in the poorest and most ignorant, must ever aspire,—with these it should be ever familiarly conversant; nor can you give it a fair road to advancement in mental and moral science, unless you throw them open for its free and manly discussion.

In regard to the other point—the cheapness of publications—it is to be regretted that that cheapness is not extended to that which exercises the most lively influence on men's feelings, to that which gives them their knowledge of passing events, to that which is intended to act on their own

opinions upon what is really the management of their own affairs from week to week, and from day to day; and which restriction is most truly called a taxation upon knowledge,—the most absurd, the most iniquitous taxation that ever entered into the mind of man to devise, or that was ever imposed by the most selfish, narrow-minded, and despotic legislation.

In these means I trace a tendency towards something greater. I trust that there is in these a progress towards that UNIVERSAL EDUCATION which shall not only take the entire infantile population of the country under its benignant and parental care, but which shall also regard the sphere of education as extending throughout the whole of human life, and provide well for adult instruction also; which shall open institutes, and schools, and lectures, and exhibitions, and rich treasures of works of art, and all that can lead man to the full enjoyment of his mental and moral powers through all the gradations of his being; national education, of all classes and of all ages, for which we have so abundant a provision in those funds left by the well-meaning piety of our ancestors, and which any Church Reform that deserves the name must have in view the application of, to the spiritual culture of the entire population of the country.

Connected with these, there must be the amelioration of the physical condition of the poor. It is of no use to offer knowledge to a starving man; nor can the human mind and the human heart ever fairly unfold their qualities and capabilities, while diet of a pernicious character, improper clothing, and imperfect shelter, premature labour, and frequent exposure to the severity of the seasons, are the lot of the youthful population. The condition of men, their physical condition, must advance in connexion with the progress of their intellectual and moral culture. How this great problem is to be solved, by what means a more righteous and beneficent distribution of the produce of

toil is to be effected, is a point far too large—even were I conscious of being able to throw a light, which I feel my inability to do—to be treated of incidentally, and in this cursory manner. But one thing may commend itself to our minds: the condition of the poorer classes has actually improved. Whatever partial instances there may be, as there must be in the fluctuations of a great commercial country, still, upon the whole, the comparisons which the personal experience of many, the records of former generations, and the inductions of a careful inquiry will enable us to arrive at, show an advancement, though gradual, in the condition of the poor and labouring classes. They are not now exposed to many privations which fell upon their predecessors of a few generations back. The instances in which a retrograde movement must be noticed, are principally of those where unskilled labour has been displaced by machinery; and this is a kind of suffering for which one can scarcely imagine any remedy but the transfer of the labour of the individuals so occupied to other and better modes of exertion; for this species of labour must deteriorate in its remuneration with the advance of scientific discovery and its application to the arts, and eventually must be totally annihilated. In proportion as the freedom of institutions and the diffusion of knowledge make a nation an association for universal good, monopolies will be swept away; wealth will not only be produced in the most efficient modes, but distributed on the most righteous principles; each will find his most useful place in society; and morality and happiness will set up and sustain their most energetic reciprocal action. The amelioration of the condition, physical, mental, and moral, of the great mass of the community, is the point towards which all efforts should be directed, and to which all institutions should tend. It is the great object, not only of human effort, but of providential power. We behold it advancing in the course of events; and in the signs of the times read

the celestial promise of its accomplishment. It is a good and joyous thing to see springing up among the poor themselves, those qualified for their instructors. From that class must their instructors come; those with whom they feel sympathy, those with whom they know to be acquainted with all the sad realities of their condition, and who speak to them in the strong and glowing language of personal experience. Such men as Ebenezer Elliot,—such men as many of those whose pens are employed in cheap publications, these are the men; these are the men whose voices will be heard by their fellows; these are the men who in the rise of their own intellect are raising the intellects of all their brethren, who will find their way to their minds, who will find their way to their hearts; while those who have what is called a better education, a seeming superiority and strength, but in this case the source of real weakness and inefficiency, may play about it and about it, and ever fail of accomplishing the purpose which they most earnestly desire.

Thank God for raising up such! And what does Providence in raising them up? Still there is the same great purpose contemplated. It is not merely that a poor man like Robert Burns, or Ebenezer Elliot, should gain literary renown; not merely that he should inscribe the name of the ploughman or the iron-worker upon the roll of those who are admitted into the temple of fame, and whose statues wear the everlasting bays or laurel; but for this—more effectually to raise the class to which they belong, the great class of the nation, and in that to raise the entire community eventually, another grade in the scale of being. And this is the object of all individual greatness, whether existing in our own time and country, or whether belonging to the records of history; it has all a bearing on the extended enlightenment and well-being of the most numerous class, and through that of humanity. When God breathes the spirit of maritime

adventure into a man's bosom, and incites his mind with dreams of other regions which may lie beyond unexplored oceans; when he leads him to contemplate, and speculate upon, the distribution of earth and sea, upon the diversified surface of the globe, and acquaints him with traditions of those who in past times, blown by the winds, have made, and left traces of, some rich yet unimproved discoveries, which a fortunate successor may restore or rival; and when he sends forth a Columbus to the discovery of America, it is not that his name shall be repeated with admiration from age to age; it is that by the creation, almost, of a new world, there should be an asylum for oppressed humanity in the old world; that there should be good done to all human beings; and that the great mass of the people, from generation to generation, should look back to him as one who was part of a mighty plan by which they are wiser, better, happier, and more hopeful than they could ever else have been. So when God stimulates the patriot,—when he inflames a man with that holy fire which impels him to devote all his energies, mental and bodily, and to peril or sacrifice life, for the deliverance of his country,—when he arms him with wise forethought and capacity of combination which may enable the rawest materials to conflict with mighty hosts of armed veterans; when he creates a Washington, it is not that the patriot may bear a venerated name, and that generation after generation may look to him, and imbibe from him the impulse to do something for the abolition of tyranny, and the extension of human freedom, but that through the liberty thus achieved,—that through the abasement of despotism thus foiled and baffled,—that through the fair and equal institutions thus built up, the great mass of humanity may be raised higher in the scale of being and of happy existence. So when a philosopher traces in the combinations of science new principles bearing in a thousand different ways on theoretical and practical truth; or

when the discoverer applies those principles to works of art and to the manufacture of the necessities of life ; when by one of these agencies after another, invention is brought to such a pitch as to threaten (as has been sometimes unwisely apprehended) the expulsion of human labour—rather say the happy substitution for it, of the labour of metals, wood, and of the elements ; it is not merely that the name of Davy or of Watt should be given to posterity with all due applause, but it is that by inventions such as theirs the amount of human good should be multiplied, and the great mass of society be conducted, by means of its increased conveniences, to the advancement of its physical enjoyments, of its mental and moral condition, and a fresh impulse be given to the progress of humanity.

This is the plan of Providence, alike with individual agencies, and with the events of history or of revelation. For this the tendencies to social union are planted in our constitutions, and conducted through their successive developments. For this men are impelled to all the forms of society ; first the family and the household, then that of the city, then that of the nation and the empire. It is for this they are guided through the gradations which conduct them from the savage condition to the arts and knowledge and refinement of the highest state of civilization ; it is that the state of the great mass of society may be ameliorated—that the physical, the intellectual, and the moral condition of the most numerous class may be improved indefinitely. Yea, when God gives religion to the world,—when he touches the tongue of the pleader for piety and morals with a live coal from the altar, as it were, and enables him to reach the heart and touch the feelings of those whom he addresses,—when he inspires him to unfold the truths that connect the present with futurity, and the visible with the invisible, it is not that this or that man should be canonized as a saint, nor that these feelings and emotions be rested in ;

but it is, that tracing all the grandeur of the prospect, and feeling all the benignity of its influence, there should be an elevation of humanity in the scale of being, by the powers of the world to come, operating on the thoughts and feelings of this world ; and thus something more be done, and *that* the last and greatest achievement, for sustaining the dignity and ensuring the eternally progressive happiness of universal humanity, beneath the smile of its Almighty Parent.

FINSBURY LECTURES.

REPORTS OF LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE
CHAPEL IN SOUTH PLACE, FINSBURY,
BY W. J. FOX.

No. II.

ARISTOCRATICAL & POLITICAL
MORALITY:

(THE SECOND OF A COURSE ON "MORALITY AS MODIFIED BY THE
VARIOUS CLASSES INTO WHICH SOCIETY IS DIVIDED.")

LONDON:

CHARLES FOX, 67, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCXXXV.



THOMAS CURSON MANSARD, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

ARISTOCRATICAL AND POLITICAL MORALITY.

THE subject of this morning's lecture is, as you know by the notice already given, Aristocratical and Political Morality; that is to say, those aberrations from the standard of morality, considered as the means of happiness, which are produced by the distinctions implied in the first of these terms, or which result from the possession of political power and the collisions of political warfare.

Aristocracy may be said to be of two kinds; there is a natural aristocracy, and an artificial aristocracy; and they are as dissimilar in their character and in their influence as they are in their origin. The one consists of those differences between man and man, which are either born with us, or which we are born with certain tendencies and facilities for realizing; the other consists of those differences which are the results of social institutions contrivances, and arrangements: one of these I take to be classed amongst the greatest blessings of humanity; and the other is, according to my apprehension, one of its most pernicious evils. The aristocracy of nature consists, as I have just said, in various differences which are either born with us,—which belong to that diversity of human constitution at a conviction of which, I think, every observant philosopher must arrive; or which there is a tendency, a strong and prevailing tendency in the nature and in the early circumstances of individuals, to arrive at the possession of. For instance, I should say that the

first and most simple quality of natural aristocracy is bodily strength—an obvious difference between man and man, provided for in his constitution, manifested from his very birth, and which has been found to obtain at all times and in all places. It is this which led to the first personal distinctions that can be traced between men; this made the chieftain of the savage tribe in ancient times, as it evaporates now in making the best wrestler on the village green. In either case its influence was probably useful, as leading by the simplest mode to some notion of diversity, of order, of harmonious combination. It was this which made the first heroes, and the best class of men that ever bore that appellation; those men who under the impulse they received from a consciousness of their own powers, did the services which a rude age required—who went forth to rid the world of wild beasts that invaded the dwellings, the ill-defended dwellings of the first settlers among ancient tribes,—whose feats are like those recorded in a little further advanced state of society, in the book of Judges. We find it was often this quality that led to a man's judging (as it was called) in Israel. His political elevation was a consequence of the prowess which afforded a rallying point to his subjugated and scattered countrymen, and enabled them to effect their deliverance from the aggressions of the neighbouring tribes, who were endeavouring permanently to enslave or utterly to destroy them. In a much later period this was a character of the knight-errantry of chivalry; it belongs to the best qualities with which that character has been associated, namely, the generous employment of superior bodily energy for the mitigation of some of the evils which attend the formation of the social condition.

Another source of natural aristocracy is to be found in that superior fineness of the senses, that greater facility for receiving impressions from the objects around, which it is, I think, demonstrable that some constitutions are

gifted with above others in a very high degree. It was this which led to the first notices of musical sounds. This led to the various inventions that are attributed to an early period of society—the working of different kinds of metals, and the fashioning them into implements which might minister to human convenience or to human enjoyment. This formed the minstrels, the bards of an early age—those whose instructions were in their own sensations—whose musical science was in their own perception of the affinity of sounds, of the result of their melodious sequence or harmonious combination, and the power in themselves to form such combinations and to produce these effects in others. And verily these men were in their time a blessing to society. The minstrel might be often the attendant of the baron ; but he was frequently a better man than the baron, for his influence was of a softening, and a refining tendency : it occasioned many a mitigation of the barbarities and cruelties of warfare as then conducted, and inspired men with thoughts and feelings of a somewhat finer nature than would have germinated in the rudeness of mere martial prowess.

It is this constitution, too, under certain modifications, which leads to the pursuit of natural philosophy,—to the combinations of experimental philosophy,—to the invention of useful machinery,—to the formation of those contrivances, gradually becoming more complicated, by which the productions of the earth are rendered efficient for the support, clothing, and comfort of man. The individual who manifests an early propensity towards pursuits of this description, has generally a keener eye for the perception of qualities in external objects, and a greater facility for marking the differences which exist ; he forms, from the exercise of senses so gifted, a stronger habit of noticing the different combinations that may be effected, and the results that may be produced, than other men, and acquires a corresponding facility for their realization ;

and thus arises the keen and careful analysis of the philosophical experimentalist; and all that acuteness of invention and discovery in science, art, and manufactures, which has in various ages and countries led men to the employment of various kinds of apparatus, which have gradually grown into machinery of the most astonishing power.

The same natural tendencies lead to the production of the artist, and to the promotion of art in all its various forms and modifications. The formation of the eye so as to be particularly influenced by colour is the natural foundation of skill in painting; as a similar perception of form is of the desire and power for the production of sculpture; and as a general power of accommodating the physical frame to the expression of mental emotion, and to the embodiment of even the thoughts which others have poured forth, and of the passions which others have delineated, forms the artist of the theatre, only known in a far more advanced grade of civilization.

In all these cases, as in the first, and indeed more manifestly than in the first (bodily strength), there is a provision made for the benefit of society. Those whose senses are less acute, whose frames are less adapted to this nicety of observation, or to this facility of production, instead of being worse, instead of being degraded or injured, are all the better for the possession of such faculties by others of their fellow-creatures. There is a constant ministering to them for their enjoyment and for their improvement, and thus also is produced that diversity which constitutes beauty, and promotes utility, in the moral world as well as in the natural world; and which, when exhibited in the varieties of human power, taste, and feeling, is not less subservient to good than the variety of forms, of colours, and of combinations, which so delight us in the phenomena of the heavens and the earth.

Another source of natural aristocracy is of a more remote kind, because the tendency is not so promptly perceived or realized ; still I think it is correctly referred to nature in distinction from art, and to the common tendency of humanity as distinguished from the arrangements of society : I mean that tenacity, that aptitude for persevering, for continued effort in a given direction, which seems to imply an original peculiarity of constitution, mental or physical, which some men have always developed much more remarkably than others. It is this which leads to the aristocracy of industry, of foresight, of prudence, of experience, and of character. It is this which causes some men to be marked out from others ; because having fixed on an object, which is generally selected with greater care, they pursue it with far more singleness and tenacity of purpose,—holding on year after year, in spite of various discouragements from within and from without,—still piling up and piling up the building which they have determined to raise ; appreciating consistency and justice, in their essential connexion with honourable success in an honourable pursuit, however humble may be the character of that pursuit ; and thus at length, without any aid from political contrivances, without any interference from institutions, without any vantage ground given to them by art and human combination,—thus at length becoming men to whom their fellow-men look with trust, and honourable confidence ; on whom they place a reliance similar to that which the traveller feels, when he plants his foot upon firm and solid ground, having escaped from the unstable footing of bog and marsh ; such as encourages their fellow-creatures through all their diversities to prize character and to perceive the means by which it is to be attained and realized, and the good which it bestows upon individuals, both in its direct and in its indirect and reciprocal agency.

Another condition of natural aristocracy is to be found in those mental powers, whatever be their source—for that is a question into which I enter not at all; whether these things be resolved, according to one system of philosophy, into the spiritual nature of the mind, and the supposed diversity of faculties in that spiritual existence; or whether, with others, we ascribe it to early association; or whether it be traced to the configuration of the brain, and its different organs: it matters not to my purpose what theory be adopted.) I think the diversities, which I am now describing, cannot but be traced to original differences in the constitution of the individual; and another of these is that which generates the powers of combination, of moral calculation—the faculty for estimating what passes in men's thoughts; for, observing and tracing their actions, and assigning them rightly to the principles from which those actions emanate, and which thus qualifies men for rulers over their fellow-creatures; and leads to qualities that point out the orator, the legislator, the statesman; and, in an early age, and with favourable opportunities, the founder of a kingdom, or an empire.

The only remaining source of natural aristocracy which I need advert to, is that fineness of temperament, or felicity of influence, which produces higher qualities than any yet enumerated, and to be exercised in a nobler sphere, the poetical and philosophical nature,—the intense feeling, which makes man's frame vibrate to every impulse like an Eolian harp, but with more tenacity as its emotions are stronger,—the clear thought, which enables him to brush away with a prompt and strong hand the cob-webs of sophistry, and to link closely and firmly together the logical chain of cause and effect; and thus to trace the principles of humanity, and the operation of those principles, and to draw out the thoughts and feelings which are to provide for their further de-

velopment: and as the last class mentioned connects itself with the organization of men in society, so does this with the tendency to progression; and it furnishes the means by which that progression is continually carried on—namely, by the production of individuals who start forward in advance of their fellow-creatures, and marshal on the whole human race in that grand career which is assigned for it by its omnipotent Creator.

Now, in all this one traces good—almost unmixed good. It is the dictate of nature that there should not be one great blank equality, or identity rather, in the human constitution; that there should be a variegation in humanity, like that which obtains in the stars of heaven, and in the productions of the earth; and that these varieties should be such as that each may minister to each, and the powers of all may tend to the advance of the whole. Even in this native aristocracy, it must not be concealed that there are temptations. The sense of superiority, however well founded, however true, requires caution and check. Though derived immediately from nature, though held by the patent of the Almighty, superiority is perilous to man. It is unwholesome for him not to recognize something superior to himself; not merely in the heavens above, but amongst his brethren of the earth around him. As there may be consolation to distress, by finding in what was deemed “the lowest deep, a lower still;” so there is a wholesome lesson to superiority, in finding itself impressed with reverence for a superiority of some other description, which its own powers will not enable it to realize. There is a necessity for keeping down the sense of difference, by looking at the qualities which are universal. It is desirable for nature’s nobles, if they would avoid the abuse of their own inherent aristocracy, that they should see how comparatively insignificant are even their advantages, when put by the side of the great common

principles of our being,—the principles which are alike inherent in the noblest, and in the meanest,—the principles to which humanity owes all its lustre as a peculiar nature, and to which, therefore, every individual in humanity should do a becoming, and honourable, and useful reverence. Man's fraternity, his common nature, his common destiny, in the sight of the Creator, should ever be graven (and I believe that it is generally most deeply graven) in the hearts of those whose individual portion may yet be in nature's aristocracy.

But while these qualities tend so to good, it may also be remarked that their tendency is connected with the circumstance of their being personal qualities; of their being not hereditary. I apprehend that even the aristocracy of nature would lose its worth, and might be transformed into a most oppressive mischief, were these qualities capable of regular transmissions from father to son through successive generations, or were they, in fact, so transmitted. For what would then happen, but that different races of mankind would arise, of which some would inevitably be the oppressors of others? There would be a tribe of strong men, who, elevated above mere intelligence, would reduce the rest to vassalage. There would be the mental aristocracy, which, to preserve its own ascendancy over strength, would have recourse to all sorts of arts, tricks, contrivances, and falsehood, and become alike corrupt in itself, and the agency of corrupting others. While the best qualities, mental and moral, if we suppose them to be possessed in succession, within certain defined limits, would produce a tribe that could not retain those lively sympathies with the rest of humanity, which could not exercise those deep feelings of benevolence towards others, that naturally spring out of the very same qualities where they are only of personal possession.

If the application of the hereditary principle, even to

the aristocracy of nature, would transform that good into an evil, what can we anticipate of a distinction that has no other foundation whatever? The artificial aristocracy is based altogether upon the forced application, the application in spite of nature, of the hereditary principle. It is manufactured by endeavouring to make all the provisions that institutions can make for hereditary property, hereditary dignity, and hereditary authority. It endeavours to promote the first by such a theory or practice as that of primogeniture; by tying up immense property to one particular line, and thus obstructing the natural and wholesome flow of wealth from one part of the community to another, by which it would visit all in turn, like the light of heaven, or like the refreshing rains that water the fields, and crown them with fertility. It fixes its boundaries to fluctuations of this description, and endeavours to create a class which, from age to age, shall be broadly marked, by large possessions, from the rest of the community. So it is sought to keep up distinctions by means of title,—by sinking the proper name of the individual,—by creating a fictitious name, which originally had a meaning, because it designated those who exercised certain authority within certain localities. The titles of the peerage were originally marks denoting office: they described those who held property in a certain district, and who exercised certain authority in that district; who were petty governors; who were the rulers and judges, the chieftains of those spots, with some form of authority, some modification of the sovereign authority entrusted to their charge. But all this descriptiveness and propriety soon pass away, and the designation sinks into a mere falsehood, or an unmeaning sound; very often, indeed, not appertaining to any descendant of the original possessor, not describing the family or race from which its wearer sprang, but altogether arbitrary, a standing lie in the face of history and of the community.

While these methods for marking out a class have little to recommend them, they are far less objectionable than the creation of permanent distinctions between man and man, by the investiture of some with hereditary authority—with authority to make laws—with authority to sit in judgment, and that on the most important considerations, involving even the fortune, life, and honour of the individuals who are subjected to such a tribunal. What can be a greater sacrifice of all consistency, of all reasonableness and propriety, of all morality, than that a man should be deemed qualified and be authorized to sit in judgment, not only on what is dearest to individuals, but in what may concern the interests of a mighty empire, and affect the permanent condition of countless millions of human beings—I allude to such judicial investigations as was that of the impeachment of Warren Hastings for his conduct as Governor of India,—what more absurd or immoral than that any one should be entitled to act as a judge, as an irresponsible judge, on questions so momentous as this, simply because he is the son of the son of the son of a man who won a battle, or who burnt a fleet, or who betrayed a kingdom, or who was the illegitimate offspring of a sovereign, or who was accessory to the restoration of the Stuarts, or to the expulsion of the Stuarts—yet on such grounds as these has originally rested the authority of supreme judges on such immense questions, in civilized communities. Nay, worse; that awful judicial authority has itself been only an incident comparatively disregarded in its subordination to the purpose of forming and perpetuating a privileged class.

I beg that the purpose of these lectures may not be lost sight of in the remarks which I am making. The object of these lectures is strictly moral as contradistinguished from what some call political; though I never give up the principle that politics are but a branch of

morality. But my object is not to show whether a free people should or should not create a privileged class—an aristocracy; my object is not to enter into the question—the political question—of such an institution, the principles on which it is founded, or the changes to which it should be subjected; but, as I have explained before, to trace the deflections from the standard of morality which arise from the circumstances of the different classes of which society is now constituted: an enquiry which no one can effectively or completely teach morality to others without instituting for himself, and communicating the results to their minds. It is in reference to this view, and to this only, that I enter upon the considerations which now present themselves to us. Else were it easy (and I by no means blink the question that I have a strong opinion on the subject) to show the utter flimsiness with which, as to any alleged purpose whatever of common good, such institutions, arbitrary in their nature and in their principles, are sometimes defended. It might be shown, that so far from giving that permanency to the forms of institutions, and to the conditions of a people, which they have sometimes been regarded as conferring, they are in fact the most common and proximate cause of discontent and convulsions, and have linked themselves in history with the most violent strifes and the bloodiest revolutions. It might be shown, that the supposed tendency in hereditary title to make a son emulate the virtue of his sire, through successive generations, is simple fiction. Facts upon facts might be piled to demonstrate, that titles won by the purest patriotism, have been worn by those only notorious for the basest servility. Besides it might be shown that were there any ground for the notion of hereditary transmission of moral qualities, it would act the other way as to the utility of the institution. For how many of those who in any country and under any

arrangement for the production of aristocracy have won title and fortune, and left them to their descendants, have won them by virtue or wisdom, or by aught that it is desirable should be perpetuated in their posterity? How many have been indebted for their nobility to some military adventurer following a lawless chieftain to battle, and receiving his share of plunder in some rich tract of country, reaping where he had not sown, and reducing to slavery those by whose toils and industry it had been fertilized. Such is often the founder of a long and noble line; and who would wish his children, from generation to generation, to evince the same qualities? Nay, for actions baser far, because around this there is something of the false glare of military adventure and personal valour—for actions infinitely baser than this, have such prerogatives been conferred—for the most cowardly assassinations; for the basest of treachery; for all that we could almost wish should perish for ever in the individual, and not blot, by its record, the annals of the human race. O, if the devices of heraldry were traced to their origin, how many a coroneted peer or prince, with anything like the common feelings of humanity in his bosom, would desire to erase them from his equipage, and from any of the displays of his personal importance. He would blush to see them, to be reminded of them; and would sooner go forth in the plainest mode that ever Quaker adopted, than bear the emblazoned escutcheon of his ancestors.

It is said sometimes, that education for high and important offices is a rare attainment; that it cannot be expected, unless provision is made for it; and that provision is best made in the separation of a class that shall be so trained. Were our notions of the power of education to be derived from the instances in question, I fear we should very much modify those benevolent theories, which depend so completely on the influence of education,

for a change in the intellectual and moral condition of humanity. But they are not; and, moreover, it is one of the results of the institution of aristocracy to spoil education; to reduce it to mere convention; to alienate it from the common and the useful; and to shed the fame of learning upon that which can be rendered exclusive, and is capable of being a monopoly. That it lamentably fails of producing high mental attainment and power, any man has only need to have recourse to the most simple records of the past to ascertain. I took up the other day one of those useful publications, of the Society for the Diffusing Useful Knowledge, (which has well acted up to its title in this particular) the "Companion to the Almanac," for the year 1832. They gave in that number a "Literary Chronology," in which they have classed writers under the three heads of, first, those who have excelled in imagination—in the production of poem or fiction; secondly, those who have been distinguished for the setting forth of matters of fact—the historian, and the geographer, who belong to the descriptive, rather than the inventive; and, thirdly, expositors of science, and philosophers properly so called—men of speculation, men of large minds, and with that power of combination, to which I was just now adverting. I had the curiosity just to take the list for the last century, from the year 1700 to 1800, and to see what proportion that class (which is sometimes said to be created and supported, in order that their intelligence may be developed in a far higher degree than is possible in the inferior classes) to see, I say, what proportion they had contributed to the list on which rests England's glory for that period—her mental, her scientific, her philosophical glories in the eyes of the world at large, and of posterity. There were altogether one hundred and thirty-five names. In the first list,—those that have excelled in fiction, in works of the imagination—there are fifty-three

names, including one member of the aristocracy, Lady Mary Wortley Montague. In the next class,—those who distinguished themselves by historical productions—there were thirty-one names, of which two, Lord Lyttleton and Horace Walpole, belonged to the aristocracy. In the other class,—the noblest and most important of all—there were fifty-one names, to which three belonged to the aristocracy—Lord Bolingbroke, and two others, whose names do not at this moment occur to me. And this petty, paltry contribution was all that was derived from that order,—for two or three descendants of ancient but impoverished families are scarcely to be reckoned as belonging to it; while in poetry, where least it might be expected, (the poor often achieve science) there were such names, amongst others, as those of Akenside, the author of “*The Pleasures of the Imagination*,” deriving his origin from the humblest station; and Chatterton, the poor Bristol boy, whom patronage left to perish prematurely by his own hands, in consequence of the want, aye, of the means of bare subsistence; and of Burns, the ploughman, who walked in glory and in joy on the mountain-side, when those who were appointed to privilege and inheritance for the sake of cherishing intelligence, were not even stretching forth the slightest portion of the power which they possessed, to preserve genius its existence, and to keep from the lowest state of depression the unaided talent that defied their privileged competition.

It can scarcely be imagined but that permanent distinction, not connected with personal qualities, should generate a high degree of selfishness. The man who is marked out from others,—whose very existence seems to be reckoned a virtue,—who simply for existing (for anything more than this is optional on his own part) who, simply for existing, is endowed with the produce of the toil of twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty thousand of his fellow-

creatures, will naturally suppose that his existence has something in it of good and of glory. He will naturally suppose himself a counterpoise for these toiling thousands from day to day, the results of whose ceaseless exertions all flow to him alone. There is no stimulus. Give a man the reward of industry without the exercise of industry—invest him at once with that for which others must plan and labour and persevere through many and many a weary year of their lives, till probably towards the close, should they even then succeed—visit him with the reward of wisdom without the attainment of wisdom—let him have that meed of legislative and directing authority which should crown the man who, from his earliest years, has been watching his fellow-creatures and himself with an observant eye—the political philosopher who has made himself acquainted with the influence of institutions upon manners and upon happiness, under the various modifications to which they have been subjected in different countries throughout the world's history, ancient and modern; bestow on him the meed of talent and of character—give to him the appearance of that confidence which others look to as their recompense for a consistent course pursued under hard trials and temptations, gaining to themselves golden opinions by a long and painful process—and what do you but annihilate the worth of such qualities to these men? What do you but produce and encourage in him a sense of innate difference and superiority which is altogether a fallacy, but which leads him to act accordingly, and therefore divests his conduct of those benignant tendencies which belong to actions which are in conformity to truth? You teach him to disregard the most precious qualities of mind and character. All other classes must be permanently underrated by the dispositions which are thus fostered, and humanity itself contemned.

The Emperor Nicholas of Russia, it is said, made a

present the other day to the Emperor of Austria, of a magnificent carriage, with its horses, and to have given him a coachman into the bargain—probably thinking him by no means the most valuable part of the donation. This is only an exhibition on a small scale of the feeling which it is the tendency of every distinction between man and man, arbitrarily kept up, to produce towards their fellow-creatures. It is a comparative trifle to say that the barons of old would have done things like this in our own country: where humanity is undervalued, much worse is done in every and any country. Human souls are given away, not in individual donations, but by thousands and by millions; and they are only estimated according to the advantages which may be derived from them by privileged individuals. O, one cannot tell the privileges—privileges trampling humanity under foot—which belonged to aristocracy in its feudal form, the spirit of which, though despoiled of much of its power to harm, has descended to later times; privileges of so oppressive, so iniquitous, so gross, so beastly a character, that it is impossible even to enumerate them in conformity with the proprieties of modern language.

The insolence thus generated is kept down, in some measure, from being manifested by one portion of the privileged class towards another, by the very reasonable, the very humane, the very Christian practice of duelling, which associates itself most intimately with the notion of such a barrier between one class of men and another class of men; thus tending, whilst it is resorted to professedly—and it may be in such a state of society with some sort of reason—for the purpose of repressing insolence, to leave it altogether unrepressed in one class towards another class. Thus was it that Voltaire—the man whose name was to resound through Europe, while the names of the noblesse, his compeers, were able to furnish nothing that could approach and be visible within

the sphere of its lustre—the man who was to act upon the opinions of the intelligent and thinking classes in all the countries of Europe, and eventually all over the world—the man whose mighty powers (whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the tendency of the exercise of those powers) were such as to show him to be one of the aristocracy of nature, diversified as they were by so marvellous a keenness and intelligence, by so quick a sense of the incongruous and the ridiculous, by so much power even of poetical expression, and by such intense burning to destroy some of the oppressions under which men were then groaning; this man was subjected to the insult of receiving blows, inflicted by the cowardly agency of hired hands, without being allowed the privilege, such as it was, of the only reparation which, in the opinion and according to the feelings of the higher portions of society in his own country, could wash away the stain, and redeem him from the indignity. Such is the aristocracy of art in its collision with the aristocracy of nature.

The exclusive feeling of aristocracy extends itself to mental acquirements: it grasps at education, especially in a season of advancing knowledge, when information is spreading throughout the different orders of the community; it grasps at instruction as one of its perquisites or monopolies; and, however suppressed the feeling may be, or however there may be in some instances a noble superiority to it, or however it may be overborne by the importunate demands of the great many who will be taught, and will have the means of further instruction—still there are not wanting, symptoms which teach an impressive though disgusting truth. It has been possible for even enlightened and liberal noblemen, in an enlightened and liberal age, and one of rapidly extending knowledge, to refuse assistance in the formation of schools which would bring education of the very highest description within the easy grasp of the great majority

of the middle classes of the country, because (I believe I am using something like the very words), because they could see no reason why the old schools of the country, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, &c., should be put in abeyance, and the nobility patronize and subscribe to schools which would give the children of the "commonalty" and the "lower orders" a better education than their own sons.

Another tendency to a deflection from the genuine standard of morality in the existence of such circumstances, is that which is traced in what are, by universal consent regarded as the personal vices—as gaming, licentiousness, and follies and vices of a similar character, which are the particular objects of attack of those moralists who endeavour to keep out of view the character of virtue or vice in its connexion with what relates to man's public acts, and his conduct as a member of the community; now the prevalence of qualities of this description, wherever an artificial aristocracy has existed, is so notorious that it can scarcely require either proof or illustration. Mr. Edgeworth, in his *Essays on Education*, mentions with deserved censure the fact, that Lord Holland, father of Charles James Fox, used to give him, when a mere boy, five guineas a week, for the very purpose of spending it in games of chance; and instances there are of allowances of much larger amount, for purposes as much worse as the donations were greater.

The condition of women is one of the surest tests of the advancement of a country in knowledge, in justice, in all that constitutes civilization, and its superiority over the savage state. The obligations of women to the benignant spirit of Christianity have often been set forth and dilated upon eloquently. Why should not the same writers, the same pulpit orators, that have set forth these blessings, also show how the character and condition of women are deteriorated by artificial contri-

vances that exist in open defiance of the very spirit of Christianity? For, what is it that keeps down woman's intellect to the base level of its own frivolity, but the spirit of aristocracy? What is it that disarms woman of a fair and direct influence in matters which ought to be interesting to her mind, capable as that mind is of thought and principle, in order to invest her with an indirect influence, alike corrupt and degrading, both to those by whom, and to those upon whom it is exercised, but aristocracy? What is it that keeps woman in such a condition, by custom and by law, as to prevent her being the independent possessor and disposer of her own earnings, whether produced by the more menial occupation which she may fill, or by the highest exertions of intelligence and of genius; all of which may be and in this country often are, wrested from her; for which she is still dependent on the will of another—what, I say, keeps up this state of things but the aristocracy? And what else is it that provides for that continuous flow of degradation—the result of which is, not only to throw thousands and tens of thousands, who might have adorned society, into a state of degradation below society, but to spread a corrupt taint throughout the whole society?—what but the spirit of aristocracy produces and keeps up this evil, unknown comparatively in ancient times, and which stamps the foulest brand it bears upon modern and Christian Europe?

In my opinion it would be a good, if the protection of woman were better provided for, and her escape from what is often enduring misery secured, by some well-principled and generally applicable law of divorce; some law more favourable to her than the Mosaic law, which allowed man the irresponsible power of repudiating; and based on such principles as obtain throughout a great portion of Protestant Germany, and many, if not most, of the United States of America;

such as were in principle advocated by all the great leaders and authors of the Protestant Reformation ; and such as were proposed by Archbishop Cranmer and his coadjutors, in the work of the English Church Reformation. But whether this would be a good or not—about which opinions may widely differ—I apprehend that there can be but one opinion on the legislation, which, refusing an impartial, equal, and general law on the subject, provides it, practically, as a privilege for the more wealthy portion of the community, that they and they alone, shall have the means of legal escape from the marriage bond, whatever may be the provocation which renders such an escape desirable to the individual. For this is the state of things—that that bond is declared absolutely indissoluble ; but the universal law is suspended by private law, for the benefit of those who have the money and the influence to procure it. And this, I apprehend, it cannot be questioned, must greatly tend to degeneracy of manners, and to the sustainment of licentious principles, and licentious practices.

Very misplaced was the celebrated apology, that vice lost half its mischief by losing all its grossness. Vice does not lose its grossness, whatever external appearance of manners there may be in aristocracy. It never can, and never does, lose its tendency towards grossness. In a region supposed to be of far purer atmosphere than that which occasioned the sophistical plea, it has happened for a member of the very highest ranks of society, and invested with all the refinement and elegance which can be ascribed to station, to die and leave behind collections of disgusting engravings valued at thousands of pounds.

Another tendency of this state of society is to generate irreligion ; and, together with irreligion, hypocrisy. Thus it was, that the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who were the saints and the infidels of Jewry in our Saviour's

time, combined together very cordially for his destruction, and the persecution of his followers. Thus it was, that the augurs of ancient Rome kept up their superstitions, supported by the credulity of the people, until they could not meet in the streets without laughing in each other's face. Thus it was that the higher classes in France, before the revolution, and in Spain up to a comparatively recent period, sustained an external respect for forms of superstition which in their minds and hearts they had totally abjured. In this country religion may claim at the present time to be in what may be called a high degree of fashion, even the more enthusiastic modifications of religion. Still if we advert to the course of events we shall find, that up to the reign and into the reign of George III., religion was a mere jest amongst those who arrogated to be the superior class; and it was when the French revolution, and the tremendous powers which that revolution developed, seemed to be in alliance with infidelity, that alarm was taken—that the privileged class, sailing on the other tack, took religion into especial favour, for the same reason, and under the influence of the very same tendency under which scepticism, and unbelief, and scorn had previously flourished.

Now this combination is the most disgusting of all. It is not the honest, the plain-spoken, the obtrusive, and perhaps fanatical, unbeliever—the man who is forward to declare to others his renunciation of what he wishes to demolish in their minds also as errors; who speaks for this avowed purpose; who writes for it, and who perhaps within a few years may have gone to jail for it—it is not such a man who fills one with disgust; it is the unbeliever (and history shows many such,) who builds his fortunes and his honours upon the belief of others; it is the unbeliever who associates with, who courts, and perhaps eventually, who creates, bishops and archbishops; it is the unbeliever who adopts expressions of regard for

religion and the church, that in his political schemes he may have the support of churchmen, and their efficient partizanship ; it is the man who records himself, and is hailed loudly by others as the champion of the church, while he has not seen the inside of one perhaps for the greater part of his existence ; who persecutes those who speak what he thinks ; who keeps the forms of religion up, that they may keep the spirit of the people down ; who wages bloody wars, and passes restrictive laws for the nominal defence of that which in his heart he scorns ; and who, unfolding the banner of Church and King, only desires to aggrandize himself and his family by all that the Church can enable him to grasp, that the King in his munificence can bestow, or that any power can endow him with, at the nation's expense. This is the man that one turns from with disgust, as the worst of unbelievers that scepticism has ever entered on its muster roll.

The further tendency of aristocracy, I think, is both to public and private dishonesty ; exemption from those personal liabilities to which other classes of the state are subjected, cannot but make a man—and I believe there are many who can vouch for the fact—comparatively indifferent to the amount of debt incurred, or to the sacrifices which may be imposed upon that industry which has administered unremunerated to his gratification. But a far greater evil than this is public dishonesty ; and this leads me to the only further view which I can take of what was announced in the title of this lecture as Political Morality. For I take it the departure of political and public conduct from the great standard of morals consists chiefly in the separate interest of a class with power to bend the authority of the state to the promotion of that interest. Political power is chiefly in the hands, must be in the hands, of the aristocracy ; and therefore Political Morality is only a modification of Aristocratical Morality—

the most momentous modification of it, because it acts through the institutions and the policy of a country, both home and foreign, and therefore acts on the condition of millions and millions of human beings through successive generations.

I can go but little into this. It were long to tell of that original dishonesty by which the property of this country changed its character, shook off its liabilities retaining its advantages, and imposing those liabilities on the nation. For properties which have descended from the Conquest or from the days of chivalry, or from the times of the white and red roses, all which gives lustre and antiquity to nobility—these were originally, in one respect, trusts held on conditions; every man being bound to follow the sovereign to the field with his retainers, armed and provisioned, and the entire military establishment for the defence of the country being to be paid out of lands which were granted with that condition. But in the course of aristocratic legislation this is got rid of; instead of the barons finding the retainers, finding the entire army, at their own cost, the nation pays the cost, the army remains still their retainers; the estate is held without the deduction; nay, with the very important addition of the reception of the most considerable portion of that amount which is paid by the country for the support of the troops by which it is to be defended. Is not this glaring and foul dishonesty? It were long to tell, how, as growing wealth and growing intelligence forced upon the government, for the more ready attainment of supplies, the rudiments of a representative check, that check became perverted,—was transformed into the representation, not of the community that were to be taxed, but of the class that was to receive the proceeds of that taxation—and at length aggravated, under the forms of freedom, the very mischiefs which it was erected in order to control. It were long to tell what wars

have been waged under this influence—wars in which the people had no interest whatever, and could have no interest from the very first;—wars with which the people had no connexion, but that in them their treasure was wasted, in them their blood was shed, and by them too often, unhappily, their characters were deteriorated; but which still have continued, until the accumulation exhibits results at which humanity stands aghast. It were long to tell how the church, which they have sometimes endowed and sometimes plundered, has been perverted by their patronage, and made the comfortable and cheap receptacle of the junior branches of their families, and of their personal or political dependents, to the destruction of its purity, independence, and usefulness. It were long to tell how the fight of party has been sustained;—how principles have been avowed for particular purposes by individuals and by bodies, and as unblushingly cast off even after the strongest interest had been excited in the population—cast off on the first attainment of power, in order to pursue an opposite course,—how, while a variety of catch words have been coined in order to deceive mankind, there has been that mutual understanding which has only led to the advancement of a common-class interest at the common public expense;—what infamous coalitions have been made amongst themselves, and what infamous deceptions practised upon the people, unblushingly. It were long to tell how even the security of the amusements and sports of the privileged, for a time acted upon the country; so that out of ten thousand tenants of the jails in different parts of the country, nearly two thousand were committed for offences against the game laws—that is to say, were enduring punishment, and had been made criminals, for the sake of securing a somewhat despicable gratification for their superiors. It were long to trace the multitudinous roll of taxation, and the list of taxed articles of food and of

clothing, extending to all the necessities of life, and those which should be its common comforts, including even knowledge in the oppressive list of imposts—whilst that which alone implies no labour whatever for its production, which is the mere result of the fertility and diversity of soil with which God has invested the earth for man's good, escapes without impost, or with the gentlest touch of taxation that imagination can devise.

I passed over in this brief enumeration, in order to mention at a little more length, one matter which I shall introduce in the words of a communication that has appeared in the newspapers of the past week, in the leading journals of both sides, and which may therefore be taken as independent of party. If you do not see its entire pertinence at first, I think you will not fail to perceive it afterwards. It is of some interest to every one who eats bread :

“ COMPARISON OF FOREIGN GRAIN WITH THE ENGLISH MARKET.

“The highest quotation of white wheat of the first quality at *Hamburgh* is seventy-four rix dollars current the last, which answers to 23*s.* 10*d.* the quarter ; and the highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality is seventy rix dollars current the last, which answers to 22*s.* 8*d.* the quarter, and therefore the mean price at *Hamburgh* of white and red wheat together is 23*s.* 3*d.* the quarter.

“The highest quotation of white wheat of the first quality in *London* is 45*s.* the quarter ; and the highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality is 41*s.* the quarter ; and therefore the mean price in *London* of white and red wheat together is 43*s.* the quarter. It appears, therefore, that wheat is eighty-five per cent. dearer in *London* than at *Hamburgh* ; and that with the sum of 2*l.* 3*s.* a man may buy fourteen and three-quarters bushels of wheat at *Hamburgh*, whereas with the same sum he can buy only eight bushels in *London*.

“The highest quotation of *Zealand* white wheat of the first quality at *Amsterdam* is 195 florins the last, which equals 31*s.* 5*d.* the quarter ; and the mean price of wheat in *London* being 43*s.* the quarter, it follows that wheat is thirty-six and one-eighth per cent. dearer in *London* than at *Amsterdam*.

“The highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality at Antwerp is eight and three-quarters florins current the hectolitre, which answers to 36*s.* 5*d.* the quarter; and the highest quotation of red wheat in London being 41*s.* the quarter, it follows that wheat is twelve and five-eighths per cent. dearer in London than at Antwerp.

“The highest quotation of red wheat of the first quality at Stettin is thirty-one dollars current the wispel of twenty-four scheffels, which equals 21*s.* 1*d.* the quarter; and the highest quotation of red wheat in London being 41*s.* the quarter, it follows that wheat is ninety-four and a half per cent. dearer in London than at Stettin; and that with the sum of 2*l.* 1*s.* a man may buy fifteen and a half bushels of wheat at Stettin, whereas with the same sum he can buy only eight bushels in London.

“The mean or average of the prices of wheat at Hamburg, Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Stettin, is 28*s.* 1*d.* the quarter; and the mean price of wheat in London being 43*s.* the quarter, it follows that the mean price in London is fifty-three and one-eighth per cent. higher than that of the four above-mentioned places.

“The present duty on the importation of foreign wheat into England is 49*s.* 8*d.* the quarter, which is equal to the following rates: to a rate of 213*l.* 12*s.* 2*d.* per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Hamburg; to a rate of 158*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.* per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Amsterdam; to a rate of 136*l.* 7*s.* 8*d.* per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Antwerp; to a rate of 285*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* per cent. on the prime cost of wheat at Stettin; and to a rate of 176*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.* per cent. on the mean price of the four above-mentioned places.”

That is to say, the poor weaver in Spitalfields, earning his few shillings a week, with the toil of his many hours a day, pays one shilling and seven pence halfpenny for so much bread, seasoned with Aristocratical and Political Morality, as, without that condiment, he would obtain for ten pence; or, taking the average price mentioned in the extract, instead of the lowest, he pays one shilling and three-pence halfpenny for his tenpenny worth of bread. The duty or tax on what would cost tenpence at Stettin, is two shillings and fourpence halfpenny. This difference, this fearful difference, is levied upon him—

upon his bones and sinews upon his soul and body—upon his daily toil—for no other reason than this—a privileged class is created and vested with the powers of legislation. Every class, when it can, turns those powers of legislation to its own account; but it is extraordinary that any class, under any circumstances, should have dared to contemplate, and succeeded in producing, a result so iniquitous, so disgusting, so intolerable.

I know, I confess, of nothing that can deepen the impression which the bare fact just stated must make on every thinking mind, and on every feeling heart. No other country, I think, has ever borne any thing to be compared with this; no individual despotism has ever been able to perpetrate anything, which could be put in the same rank of injustice or of cruelty. It is only the power—that very peculiar, that extensive power—which can be laid hold of and wielded by the great class of the state, that could thus tax the very means of existence; that could thus tax those who have nothing but the power of labour, with the chance of obtaining work—which work they are often obliged to beg and to entreat for the bestowment of—in order to keep up that which implies no labour, is attended with no condition, and of which the least that one could expect would be, that the possessors who never have earned it, should hold it with moderation, and not increase or even sustain its value by such oppressions on their less favoured fellow-creatures.

In discussing this subject, I have endeavoured rather to show tendencies, than to describe circumstances; and rather to resort to circumstances, than to introduce the mention of persons. The invidiousness of it, and the loathsomeness there would be in going into particular facts, have led me into this course; and could I have illustrated the moral principles and tendencies of aristocracy with equal satisfaction to my own mind, or with

equal benefit to yours, I should certainly have infinitely preferred taking all the instances and illustrations from the remotest region on the face of the earth, or from the earliest period of the annals of history. But it could not be otherwise exhibited, and brought home to your mental perceptions. I have therefore been compelled to the course I have adopted, and which I think shows clearly the manner in which artificial distinctions, artificially kept up, differ from the aristocracy of nature, and tend to pervert the standard of morality.

To what an extent has our religion become merely verbal and conventional. Why has not all this been exposed before by every preacher, and in every pulpit of the United Kingdom? It is of no avail to reply that they have been otherwise, and more spiritually, occupied; that they have been reading scripture. Why, I can read scripture too—listen. The Epistle of St. James, 5th chapter:—"Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts."

Well now this is probably read in some pulpit or other, from Sunday to Sunday, and heard by hundreds and thousands; and what effect does it produce on their minds? I adopt not the denunciations in it—God forbid that I should, I merely expose evils, and endeavour to show the way in which the opinions of those whom I address may have a most important influence in the counteraction of those evils. They are of a far more enormous description than were those of the

monopolists of Judea, against whom the Apostle James poured fourth the fervency of his soul in the passage just read. And yet men tell you they receive great edification from the one, while perhaps they regard the other as a desecration. I said at the outset that these lectures were capable of a personal application, and that I would make them have it. They have, all of them, an individual bearing; they have so, if it only related to the rectification of opinion, or to the direction of public and honourable efforts. But they do more than this; we may all learn the power of circumstances in the formation of character. Indolence, servility, wealth, title, political power; what wonder that these should twist and pervert humanity! We see the natural cause of the vices which have commonly shown themselves in the class so privileged. And we see—what? That they are worse than other men? that they come into the world with different natures or tendencies? No such thing; they are what they are made, and so would others be. It were childish to vituperate the victims to a system which common acquiescence tends to support, to deteriorate, and to perpetuate. Glory to the men whose internal resisting power triumphs over the temptations of their lot, in whatever direction. The exposition I have made should lead us to render heart-honour of the purest and highest kind to those who manifest such virtuous intrepidity. When from the ranks of such a class there starts the poet who pours forth his soul in “thoughts that breathe and words that burn;” the philosopher who throws light on the path of physical discovery, or into the recesses of metaphysical truth; or the statesman of sound principles and strong affection for the people’s rights, seeing his way through the heavy mist that institutions and prejudices have gathered round the intellectual vision, and calling on public aid for making progress in his useful course; then, I say, there can be scarcely affixed a mark

upon the graduated scale of human worth too high for their deserts, and to render them the tribute they have so well and so spontaneously earned, should be a glad-some duty. And to produce this feeling is a good; it has a delightful and purifying tendency, especially as occurring amid the exhibitions, some of them most disgusting, which we have been compelled to witness.

There is, moreover, this individual lesson—this lesson for mankind—that in what exists by public opinion every person has a responsibility—a serious and solemn responsibility. He contributes by the mere expression of his thoughts, or even by his silent acquiescence, to the only means by which such institutions can be affected, to the continuance of their corruptions, or to the process by which they must be formed, and be rendered subservient to the public good.

Again, as to what comes home to individual feeling. How delightful is the contemplation of our nature, with all its faculties, tendencies, and aspirations. How important to note the circumstances which aid its development, or mar its progress. How much to be deprecated are the influences which deface God's image in his creatures, even after its lustre has appeared, and brightened, disappointing hope. Have we no interest in these observations and inquiries? No obligations arising out of their results? The present subject abounds with them; with materials for knowledge, and intimations of duty. How beautiful is humanity! How beautiful is it in the aspiring generous youth; his mind full of the lessons and the enthusiasm derived from his classical education—ill defined, yet vast conceptions of glory and of good floating in his soul, and swaying his feelings to the dedication of his own powers to purposes noble as those of the noblest characters of antiquity; contemplating a career which he persuades himself will be one of undeviating patriotism, and stern consistency,

and wide utility, ultimately earning for him a well-merited popularity, the gratitude alike of the high and the low, to one who has beaten down the public foe or traitor, and steered the vessel of the state through perilous times to safety and prosperity; and when his last victory of good for his country has been achieved, going down to his grave, not only with a name that shall be ever honoured, but with a heart simple and unsullied as in its earliest aspirations, and should it have no influence on our feelings and practical conduct, to see this fair prospect withered, darkened, and blasted; to see the spell laying hold of such a mind and working its perversion; to behold its noble powers caught in the trammels of faction, and enlisted for the low strife of party conflict—becoming more and more enthralled—the visions of his youth less and less perceptible—the foul mist thickening over the intellectual sight—till the hired and flattered tool of aristocracy takes his unblushing place in the ranks of corruption; grows from a subordinate partizan into a principal; and now divested of every principle and feeling which he once held dear, and which others held dear in him, earns the empty meed of perverted talent, and dies a lord.

Is not humanity beautiful, even in its roughest outline—In the peasant—the sturdy peasant, who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, and who thrives upon the bread he earns and eats; who walks erect as man, feeling no dependence upon others any more than they on him, and thus working and winning his toilsome way? Must not our feelings be acted on—and is it not right, useful, and practical, that they should, when we see influences at work that break him down, and rob him of his honest boldness,—that crush him into a vassal, or seduce him, should he possess political existence, into mental and moral treason to his country,—that destroy his best principles, and continually lower and lower his

state in society, till self-dependence is gone, and every mean art and grovelling purpose take such root in his character that it seems to have become native to the soil? Must we not abominate the power that thus scourges him into vassalage, bribes him into slavery, perhaps maddens him into a rioter or incendiary, and if he escape the death or exile of the felon, buries him a pauper?

Is not humanity beautiful in woman? in woman, with her youth, her simplicity, and that capacity for boundless devotion and boundless sacrifice which prepares her in any rank of society to adorn, and charm, and bless society? And ought we not to be disgusted — ought we not to dream of society coming under better arrangements than to remain subject to an influence which, in thousands and thousands of instances, interferes between the fair promise and the fairer fulfilment—brings a deadly blight over all this prospect of long, useful, and happy years of life and love,—and only presents a poor, broken-spirited, perverted creature, suffering and the cause of suffering, vicious and the cause of vice?

Is not humanity beautiful in the aspirations of the young religionist; even though enthusiasm should be there, and mingle something of its false colouring with the light of pure religion? Is it not beautiful in his fervent desire, not only to become himself more and more of that holy character which he contemplates, but to be the agent in turning others from the error of their way; in converting sinners, and in building up in knowledge and in every virtue, those who own the power of religious principle? And is it not grievous to see a promise, which is that of the life of a saint and the labours of an apostle, even after its fulfilment had commenced, broken by the worldly character of the church through whose means he is to exercise his functions; that devoted mind possessed by its engrossing temporalities hardened and embittered by its ceaseless collisions with men's properties and

rights; his soul bowed to submission to the impositions of faith and forms, and bowed yet lower to dependence upon patronage, or upon all the changes and fluctuations of political party; until, wasting a life in such struggles and interests; and impairing his character from day to day, he, at length, instead of the illustrious and useful course that at first we anticipated for him, a blessed pathway to the holy of holies, is only bound to the chariot wheels of aristocracy, and dragged through the mire to rot in Mammon's temple.

Every one may find reason in such subjects as I have discussed to institute that self-investigation which is allowed by all to be one of the foremost duties of every Christian; the duties which belong to the class of means rather than to that of ends, but which belong to the class of means in the highest order of efficiency. Now let any one consider the manner in which the influence of privilege must radiate through all the several orders of society, and he will find good ground for suspicion that he himself, in some way or other, may be within the meshes of the net; that he himself may not have altogether escaped the contagion. O God! thou didst make men upright, but they have sought out many inventions. Thou didst create men in the fraternity of equality, but many are the distinctions—vain, frivolous, and pernicious distinctions, too often—which they have set up against one another, regardless of thy voice, which speaks to them in all the works of nature, and in all the operations of providence. Religion levels, and reminds men that they are the common work of a common father: it tells them, (the New Testament from page to page) of their equality, but they heed it not: yea, they come together to hear those scriptures read, and to profess the faith which those scriptures teach, in the ostentatious exhibition of the very inequalities against which they are thus solemnly protesting, and with provision for

like inequalities in the gradations of rank amongst the ministers of religion by whom these doctrines are to be inculcated; and thy voice is not heard. The helplessness of birth levels, and all humanity comes into the world in the same feeble and dependent state. But here, from the first is man's folly at work, and the early flattery begins, and the early privilege is inculcated, until a broad girdle of distinction wraps round the babe, parting ever yet more and more, between the individual and his brethren of humanity; and thy voice is not heard or heeded. Death levels; passing his power alike on those of all ranks and stations, and again proclaiming equality. And yet even in death's regions there arises the marble monument, casting its shade on the lowly and nameless hillock, and thy voice death is unheeded and unheard. Oh, again and again must that voice speak, in the sound of providential events, in the march of human improvement, in the history of the future, already present in God's sight and included in the operation of God's plans; and again, if rightly we interpret the course of the past and reason from it to the future, again it will speak; that voice will be heard in the roaring of the mighty tide of circumstance and tendency, flowing yet onward and onward, and proclaiming in tones which are not to be resisted, that "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be made low, the crooked be made straight, and the rough places plain;"—proclaiming "the rich and the poor are met together, the Lord is the maker of them all," and "that of one blood did he form all nations of men," that we might therefore feel and act as equal brethren, love one another, and each do unto others as he would they should do unto him.

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